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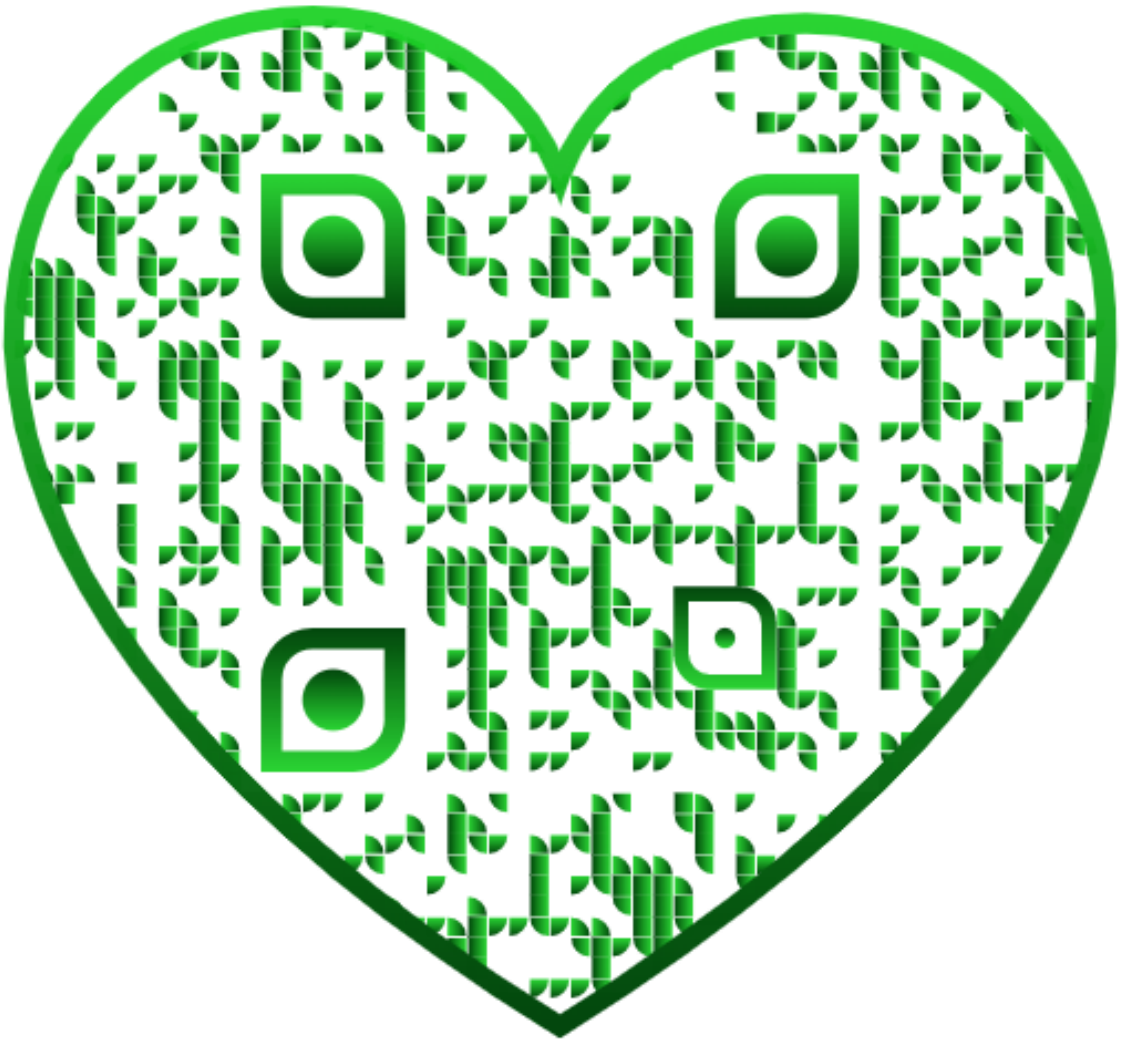

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7785 - DBZ Barchetta ST, Aubergine
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7786 - DBZ Barchetta ST FR, Black Metalic
7789 - DBZ Barchetta ST FR, Cobalt Blue
7787 - DBZ Barchetta ST FR, Metallic Red
7788 - DBZ Barchetta ST FR, Silverburst
7814 - DBZ Crucifixion Electric Guitar
7810 - DBZ Dark Angel Electric Guitar
7812 - DBZ Bare Bones Religion Series Devil
7811 - DBZ Bare Bones Religion Series Preacher
7826 - DBZ Bird of Prey, Dark Blue Metallic
7832 - DBZ Bird of Prey, Silver
7835 - DBZ Bird of Prey, White
7798 - DBZ Bolero AB, Black
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7799 - DBZ Bolero AB, White
7796 - DBZ Bolero FM, Trans Wine
7795 - DBZ Bolero FM, Vintage Natural
7794 - DBZ Bolero ST, Black
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5043 - Duesenberg 49er Cow Limited Edition
5042 - Duesenberg 49er Zebra Limited Edition
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5040 - Duesenberg Rocket II in Black & White
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8525 - Epiphone Casino in Vintage Sunburst
8695 - Epiphone ES339,Vintage Sunburst
8318 - Epiphone ES339 Ultra III, Cherry
8493 - Epiphone ES339 Ultra, Antique Natural
8528 - Epiphone ES339 Ultra, Vintage Sunburst
8529 - Epiphone ES339, Cherry
7051 - Epiphone G310, Red
8155 - Epiphone G310 SG-Shape, Ebony
5432 - Epiphone G310 SG Shape, White
8154 - Epiphone G400 Custom, Antique White
4750 - Epiphone G400 SG, Ebony
8156 - Epiphone G400 SG Shape, Worn Brown
5364 - Epiphone Les Paul Cust GX Dirty Fingers
8365 - Epiphone Les Paul Standard in Gold
8366 - Epiphone Les Paul Tribute 60s Sunburst
8190 - Epiphone Les Paul Ultra III, Ebony
8096 - Epiphone Ltd Ed Flying V, Antique White
8165 - Epiphone Ltd Ed 1961 SG, Alpine White
8325 - Epiphone Ltd Edition ES345, Alpine White
7048 - Epiphone Prophecy Les Paul Cust EX Ebony
7023 - Epiphone Riviera Ltd Ed P93 Cust Goldtop
8367 - Epiphone SG Special 1961 Reissue,White
8101 - Epiphone by Gibson, Pre-Owned
4233 - Fender USA Deluxe Telecaster, Tungsten
4231 - Fender Am Special Strat, Candy Apple Red
7942 - Fender American Standard Strat, Sunburst
8373 - Fender Am Standard Strat, Olympic White
8244 - Fender American Standard Telecaster in Candy Cola
8372 - Fender Standard Am Tele, Red, Pre-Owned
5291 - Fender Classic Player 50s Strat in Gold
5298 - Fender Classic Player Baja Tele Des Sand
4743 - Fender Classic Series 60s Strat, Blue
7112 - Fender Deluxe Lonestar Strat, Sunburst
8369 - Fender Deluxe Nashville Tele, Sunburst
8111 - Fender FSR Standard Strat in Silverburst
7075 - Fender Highway One Tele, Sunburst
4634 - Fender Jim Root Signature Strat, Black
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8224 - Fender Modern Player Telecaster, Honey Burst
7784 - Fender Mustang Pawn Shop Special, Red
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5287 - Fender Road Worn 50s Strat in Black
8290 - Fender Road Worn 60's Strat, Sunburst
4229 - Fender Road Worn Player Strat, Sunburst
4232 - Fender Road Worn Player Tele, Black
8389 - Fender Squire SE Strat in Black
8371 - Fender Std Strat Mexican, Midnight Wine
7954 - Fender Standard Strat, Copper Met Burst
4326 - Fender Standard Telecaster, Arctic White
4560 - Fender Standard Telecaster, Black
4748 - Fender Standard Tele, Brown Sunburst
8356 - Fender Stratocaster Plus in Ice Blue
8374 - Fender USA Std Strat in 3 Tone Sunburst
8243 - Fender USA Telecaster Deluxe Aged Cherry
8285 - Fret King Jerry Donahue, Natural
8176 - Gibson 1968 Flying V Reissue, Ebony
8119 - Gibson Buckethead Les Paul Studio
5299 - Gibson CS336 Semi, Vintage Sunburst
8011 - Gibson Custom ES335 Dot in Silverburst
7882 - Gibson Custom Shop ES339, Pelham Blue
8029 - Gibson ES175 1956 Original
8030 - Gibson ES175 1963 Original
8270 - Gibson ES175 1989, Sunburst
8227 - Gibson ES335 Dot Plain Gloss, Cherry
8568 - Gibson ES-339, Antique Red
7846 - Gibson Explorer in Classic White
8376 - Gibson Les Paul Classic 60s Trans Ebony
8212 - Gibson Les Paul Junior, Sunburst
8118 - Gibson Les Paul Junior, Yellow Gloss
7063 - Gibson Les Paul Standard, Chicago Blue
7033 - Gibson Les Paul Std Trad Heritage Cherry
7054 - Gibson Les Paul Standard Trad, Wine Red
8126 - Gibson Les Paul Studio '60s Tribute
8324 - Gibson Les Paul Studio '60s, Sunburst
8530 - Gibson Les Paul Studio 60s Goldtop
5090 - Gibson Les Paul Studio Lefty, Wine Red
7888 - Gibson Les Paul Studio in Alpine White
7900 - Gibson Les Paul Studio in Ebony
8117 - Gibson Les Paul Studio, Green Swirl
7851 - Gibson Les Paul Studio in Wine Red
7948 - Gibson Les Paul Supreme, Trans Black
5428 - Gibson Les Paul Traditional in Ebony
8206 - Gibson Melody Maker Special, Blue Stain
8197 - Gibson Midtown Stand w/Bigsby, Faded Red

Electric Guitars

8202 - Gibson Nighthawk. Pelham Blue
8242 - Gibson SG Junior 60s LH, Heritage Cherry
8210 - Gibson SG Junior 60s, Ebony
8211 - Gibson SG Junior 60s , Ebony LEFTHANDED
5594 - Gibson SG Special Electric Guitar in White
5152 - Gibson USA Les Paul Junior 58, Sat White
4603 - Gretsch G6136 Steve Stills White Falcon
8381 - Ibanez Prestige RGB70 in Aged White
8696 - Ibanez S770FM ATF Antique Burst Flat
5722 - Jackson DK2, Trans Black
4151 - Jackson DK2M Dinky, Snow White
4992 - Jackson JS30 Gun Metal (Pre-Owned)
8383 - Jackson PC3 Electric Used in Natural
8194 - Jackson SL2 Electric Guitar, Cobalt Blue
4150 - Jackson SL3MG Soloist, Natural
8386 - Levin LE1000 Electric Guitar in Redburst
8385 - Levin LE100S Electric Guitar In Natural
8384 - Levin LE100S Electric Guitar In Sunburst
6786 - Levin LE2000 in Metallic Redburst
4948 - Levin LE500 Electric Guitar in White
8216 - Levin LE5000 Electric Guitar, Sunburst
8051 - Lodestone Electric Artist, Trans Black
8052 - Lodestone Electric Artist in Sunburst
8048 - Lodestone Electric Artist, Trans Honey
8049 - Lodestone Electric Artist, Trans Red
8059 - Lodestone Electric Pro S, Chignal Blue
8065 - Lodestone Electric Pro S, Rodings White
8058 - Lodestone Electric Pro S, Tobacco Sburst
8066 - Lodestone Electric Pro S in Waltham Black
8055 - Lodestone Electric Pro, Chignal Blue
8056 - Lodestone Electric Pro, Rodings White
8053 - Lodestone Electric Pro, Roxwell Red
8057 - Lodestone Electric Pro, St.James Silver
8054 - Lodestone Electric Pro, Tobacco Sunburst
8072 - Lodestone Electric Standard S, T. Sburst
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8069 - Lodestone Electric Standard in White
8085 - Lodestone Pulse in Burr Maple Honeyburst
8086 - Lodestone Pulse, Matt Block
8084 - Lodestone Pulse in Metallic Gold
8087 - Lodestone Pulse, Tobacco Sunburst
7929 - MusicMan Axis Super Sport Blue Burst
4720 - MusicMan Silhouette Special, Candy Red
4664 - MusicMan Silo 30, White
4778 - MusicMan Sterling Silo 20, Black
4806 - PRS CE24 in Cherry Pre-Owned
5049 - PRS Custom 24 USA in Black Slate Finish
4631 - PRS HB1 USA Semi, Vintage Natural
5047 - PRS HB2 II USA Semi, Smoked Amber
8042 - PRS McCarty Sunburst
4184 - PRS SE Santana Electric Guitar, Orange
4185 - PRS SE Santana Electric Guitar, Yellow
8222 - PRS Soapbar II Pre-Owned, Green
6124 - Patrick Eggle Berlin Extra Lefty, Amber
5938 - Patrick Eggle Berlin Plus Lefty, Amber
6123 - Patrick Eggle Double Cutaway in Blue
6176 - Patrick Eggle LA Custom Shop in Aqua
6175 - Patrick Eggle New Wave Extra in Black
6121 - Patrick Eggle RSG Electric Guitar, Amber
4268 - Rickenbacker 330 12 String Semi, Jetglo
4269 - Rickenbacker 360 12 String Semi, Jetglo
6951 - Rickenbacker 360 Semi, Fireglo
6952 - Rickenbacker 360 Semi, Jetglo
4270 - Rickenbacker 360 Semi, Mapleglo
8021 - Squier Classic Vibe Strat 60s Lefthanded
8120 - Squier Lefthanded C.Vibe 50s Tele Blonde
4235 - Squier Vint Mod Jazzmaster Butterscotch
4256 - Vintage AV2, Sunburst
6983 - Washburn DD61 Dan Donegan
6982 - Washburn USADD70MayaDanDonegan,Grey
4757 - Washburn N1 Vintage Nuno Bettencourt Nat
6994 - Washburn PS7000, Paul Stanley Sig, Honey
7074 - Washburn SI61 Obey Scott Ian Sig, Black
6991 - Washburn USA Custom WI556, Metallic Red
6997 - Washburn V200 ProE in Black
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8410 - Washburn WI100 Electric Gtr Satin Black
7003 - Washburn WI100, White
8412 - Washburn WI18 Idol Quilted Trans Black
8411 - Washburn WI18 Idol Quilted Trans Red
7007 - Washburn WI26 Joe Trohman, Black
7006 - Washburn WI26 Joe Trohman, White
7356 - Washburn WI420KB Idol, Black
8409 - Washburn WI-440F Idol Elect Flame Honey
8408 - Washburn WI-440F Idol Tobacco Sunburst
8406 - Washburn WI-460E Idol Electric, Black
8405 - Washburn WI-460E Idol Electric in White
6988 - Washburn WI50 in Black
6989 - Washburn WI50 Pro-E, Black
8404 - Washburn WI-63 SF Donegan Sig, Black
6882 - Washburn WI666 in Blood / Chainsaw
6885 - Washburn WV40 Pro-E in Black
6995 - Washburn WV40VASIK Scott Ian Blood Splat
6890 - Washburn WV548 USA Custom, Black/White
6996 - Washburn WV66ANC, Nick Catanese, Black
6898 - Washburn Wi14 Idol in Metalic Blue
6899 - Washburn Wi14 Idol in Wine Red
8230 - Washburn X10 Bass Guitar, Black
6895 - Washburn X100 in Metallic Grey
6900 - Washburn X200 Pro in Trans Black
6425 - Westcoast ST Junior in Black & Sunburst
6449 - Westcoast ST1 in Ivory, Red & Natural
8321 - Yaira NY0021LAcoustic Guitar LH
8416 - Yamaha Pacifica 012 Electric Guitar in Red Metallic
8414 - Yamaha Pacifica 012 El Gtr Dark Blu Met
6955 - Yamaha Pacifica 112V in Rasberry Red
6957 - Yamaha Pacifica 112V in Tobacco Sunburst
4780 - Yamaha Pacifica 112VCX, Vintage White
8121 - Yamaha Pacifica 311H, Vintage White
8184 - Yamaha Pacifica 510V , Candy Apple Red
8763 - Yamaha Pacifica 611, Trans Black

Bass Guitars

4588 - Alembic Epic 4, Natural
4557 - Bass Collection Power Bass, Black
7479 - Breedlove JB350 CR4, Electro 4, Blonde
8301 - Breedlove Electro Acoustic Bass Natural
8687 - Breedlove Passport Plus B350/CB4
4910 - Bridge Cetus Electric Double Bass
4909 - Bridge Cetus Electric Double Bass in Marble Finishes
7228 - Epiphone Les Paul Special, Black
7262 - Epiphone Thunderbird 4, Sunburst Finish
8098 - Epiphone Thunderbird IV, Ebony
4882 - Fender USA 62 Vintage Precision Sunburst
7944 - Fender American Deluxe Jazz Bass, Black
8431 - Fender USA Standard Jazz Bass in Black
7943 - Fender Am Stan Precision Bass, Sunburst
7076 - Fender Highway One Precision, Wine
8177 - Fender Modern Player Jaguar Bass, Black
8113 - Fender Modern Player Available To Order
4749 - Fender Standard Precision, Candy Red
8287 - Fender Standard Jazz Bass, Brown S.burst
5572 - Fender Standard Precision, Arctic White
5190 - FleaBass The Wild One Junior, Black
5393 - Levin LAB150 Bass, Electro 4, Black
5394 - Levin LAB150 Bass, Electro 4, Natural
5392 - Levin LAB150 Bass, Electro 4, Sunburst
6782 - Levin LB100 Bass, Electro 4, Sunburst
4999 - Levin LB100J, Antique Sunburst
4735 - Levin LB100P, Black
6640 - Levin LB200, Cherry Sunburst
6781 - Levin LB200, Cherry Sunburst
6780 - Levin LB400, Redburst
8214 - Lightwaves Saber 5 String Fretless Bass
8073 - Lodestone Primal Artist
8075 - Lodestone Primal Instinct J Bass, Green
8076 - Lodestone Primal Instinct J Bass, Sburst
8077 - Lodestone Primal Instinct J Bass, Black
8079 - Lodestone Primal Instinct P Bass, Green
8080 - Lodestone Primal Instinct Pbass Sunburst
8078 - Lodestone Primal Instinct P Bass, Cream
8081 - Lodestone Primal Pro in Chignal Blue
8083 - Lodestone Primal Pro, Rodings White
8082 - Lodestone Primal Pro 4, Tobacco Sunburst
8174 - Lodestone Primal Pro 5, Chignal Blue
4997 - MTD Kingston Heir, Trans Cherry
4175 - Marleaux B Votan 4, Red
5723 - Marleaux Consat Custom 6, Natural
5713 - Marleaux M Bass Custom 5, Maple & Walnut
4178 - Marleaux Votan Deluxe 5, Blue Jeans
7930 - MusicMan Sterling 4 String Bass in Red
4703 - MusicMan Stingray 2EQ, Blue Pearl
4781 - MusicMan Stingray 3EQ, True Gold
4920 - MusicMan Stingray 5, Black
7923 - Musicman Gilded White Classic Stingray
8344 - Musicman Stingray 3 EQ Natural 4 String Bass
5110 - NS Design NXT Electric Double Bass
7301 - Ovation USA Elite, Electro 4, Natural
4253 - Overwater Aspiration Artist, Trans Red
4250 - Overwater Aspiration Deluxe 4, Amber
8435 - Overwater Aspiration Std 4, Black Cherry
8329 - Overwater Aspiration Standard 4 String in Metalic Blue
7849 - Overwater Contemporary Jazz, Trans Blue
8198 - Overwater J Series Deluxe 4, Sunburst
4355 - Overwater UK Perception, Natural
5954 - Peavey Cirrus Series BXP, Redwood
5123 - Peavey USA Cirrus 5, Natural
6909 - Rickenbacker 4001C64, Mapleglo
7890 - Rickenbacker 4003, Jetglo
6919 - Rickenbacker 4003, Mapleglo
4337 - Rockbass Corvette $$ Double Buck, Black
5122 - Rockbass Fortress 4, Blue
5121 - Rockbass Streamer LX5, Black
5309 - Rockbass Streamer Standard, Blue Stain
8213 - Spector NS2000 5 String Bass, Blue
7204 - Squier Classic Vibe Precision 50s Blonde
7260 - Squier P Bass Std Sp Lefty Antique Burst
4328 - Steinberger Spirit XT25 5, Black
7922 - VMB75 Venture Series Bass Guitar
4648 - Warwick Corvette $$ 5 Ltd, Natural
7870 - Warwick Infinity 5, Natural
5952 - Warwick Streamer LX5, Emerald Green
8436 - Warwick Thumb Bass 4 Bolt on in Natural
8229 - Washburn WB66 Idol 4 String in Trans Red
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6445 - Westcoast BG5 Fretless, Natural
6448 - Westcoast JB5, Sunburst or Amber
8438 - Westcoast JP1 4 String Bass in Black
8437 - Westcoast JP1 4 String Bass in Trans Red
8157 - Yamaha BB1024X in Vintage White
4649 - Yamaha BB2024X, Vintage White
8275 - Yamaha BB425X,Vintage White
5124 - Yamaha BBNEII Nathan East Model, Black
6360 - Yamaha SLB200 Silent Double Bass
4331 - Yamaha TRB1004J, Trans Black

Acoustic Guitars

5260 - BSG OM15F, Orchestra Model, Natural
8299 - Breedlove AC200 / SM Acoustic Guitar,Nat
5002 - Breedlove AC250CR Lefty Electro, Natural
5003 - Breedlove AD200SM, Dreadnought, Natural
5004 - Breedlove AD20SR+, Dreadnought, Natural
8033 - Breedlove AD25/SM
8035 - Breedlove AJ250/SF Plus Electro Acoustic
7979 - Breedlove Passport Plus C250SFE
4282 - Breedlove Passport + D/SFE Elec Sunburst
7995 - Breedlove D35/SMECutaway ElectroAcoustic
7996 - Breedlove J350/EF Cutaway
4894 - Cort Earth 200 Lefty Dreadnought Natural
4612 - Dave King Katrina Model 000, Sunburst
4613 - Dave King Louise, Koa, Parlour, Natural

Acoustic Guitars

4769 - EKO Ranger EQ Vintage Series, Black
8271 - EKO Ranger 6 String in Black
8249 - Eastman ERO E
4470 - Faith F000 Sig Standard 12 Fret Natural
8300 - Faith FECS Electro Acoustic Guitar
7956 - Faith FECV Venus Cutaway Electro MKII
7958 - Faith Neptune Natural Cutaway
8323 - Faith Venus 12 Electro Acoustic Guitar
4717 - Faith Venus II FV, Electro, Natural
8149 - Faith Venus Trembesi 12 String, Natural
6928 - Fender CD160SE Electro 12 String, Black
5096 - Fender CD60, Natural
4335 - Fender CD60CE Dreadnought Elec, Sunburst
7918 - Gibson Blues King in Vintage Sunburst
7032 - Gibson J200 Standard Jumbo Guitar
8241 - Gibson J200 Studio, Vintage Sunburst
4681 - Gibson J45, Custom Shop, Sunburst
8700 - Gibson J45 Custom Shop, Lightburst
7920 - Gibson J45 Vintage Sunburst
7062 - Gibson L200 Emmylou Harris Signature
8296 - Gibson J-45 Std Acoustic Guitar
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7122 - Gitane D500 Gypsy Jazz, Natural
7216 - Gitane DG250 Gypsy Jazz, Natural
4642 - Guild GADJF30, Jumbo Electro, Blonde
4555 - Jimmy Moon Bryan Adams Signature
4554 - Jimmy Moon PF0003 Electro, Pau Ferro B&S
6948 - Jimmy Moon RD3, Electro, Natural
5601 - K Yairi G1F, Parlour, Vintage Sunburst
5602 - K Yairi WY1, Bob Weir Model, Natural
8340 - LAG T100A Auditorium Acoustic Guitar
7304 - LAG T100ACE Cutaway Electro Brown Shadow
8336 - LAG T66DCE Dreadnought Cutaway
7967 - LAG T66D12 Dreadnought 12-String
8274 - Landola J855L Jumbo Left Handed
8320 - Landola JC855 Electro Acoustic Guitar LH
6784 - Levin LD30CE12, 12 String Electro, Black
5404 - Levin LD30CE12, 12 String Electro, Nat
5401 - Levin LD30CELH, Lefty Electro, Natural
5402 - Levin LD30CELH, Lefty Electro, Black
5403 - Levin LD60CE, Dreadnought Electro, Blue
5399 - Levin LD60CELH, Lefty Electro, Black
5400 - Levin LD60CELH, Lefty Electro, Natural
5407 - Levin LS500CE, Small Electro, Blue
5398 - Levin LS500LCE, Lefty Electro, Black
5397 - Levin LS500LCE, Lefty Electro, Natural
5406 - Levin LS600CE, Small Electro, Natural
8302 - Levin SV209 Acoustic Guitar
8308 - Levin SW203 BK Acoustic Guitar
8313 - Levin SW203 CETU-BK Acoustic Guitar
8310 - Levin SW203 CETU-N Acoustic Guitar
8312 - Levin SW206 CETU-BK Acoustic Guitar
8311 - Levin SW206 CETU-CS Acoustic Guitar
8294 - Levin SW206 CETU-TR Electro Acoustic Guitar
8322 - Levin SW206CETU 12 Strg Ele/Acoustic Gtr
8295 - Levin LC30 CE Electro Acoustic, Sunburst
4754 - Martin Custom X Series Electro, Natural
6010 - Martin 00028EC Eric Clapton, Natural
4317 - Martin 0028VS, Parlour, Natural
6554 - Martin D18 Dreadnought, Natural
5702 - Martin D28 Dreadnought, Natural
6008 - Martin D35 Dreadnought, Natural
5013 - Martin D41 Dreadnought, Natural
8277 - Martin DC15ME Dreadnought Cutaway
8199 - Martin DCME Electro Acoustic Guitar
8038 - Martin DCX1E Electro Acoustic Lefty
8319 - Martin DCX1E LAcoustic Guitar LH
8041 - Martin DCX1E in Black
8022 - Martin DX1 JMAE Westside Custom Series
8167 - Martin HD28VS Pre-Owned Acoustic Guitar
6007 - Martin OM21 Orchesta, Natural
8088 - Martin SWDGT SustainableWood Dreadnought
8037 - Martin WCE OMX1RAE Westside Custom Ed.
8122 - Martin WCE Style III 000CX1RE CFM Custom
4402 - Northwood MAN80 Mini Jumbo Mango Electro
6405 - Northwood R70D, Dreadnought Electro, Nat
6404 - Northwood R70 00 14fret Electro, Natural
4400 - Northwood R80, 000V Electro, Natural
6403 - Northwood R80, 0M Electro, Natural
5093 - Ovation CDX24 Electro Acoustic Guitar in Natural
4855 - PJ Eggle Etowah, 000, 12 Fret, Natural
7253 - PJ Eggle Linville C, OM, Natural
4779 - PJ Eggle Linville Gareth Pearson Electro
4856 - PJ Eggle Saluda C, Small Jumbo Elec, Nat
4857 - PJ Eggle Saluda, Small Jumbo, Natural
7915 - Pilgrim by Vintage VPG100
6115 - Rally Resonator
4620 - Recording King RM996 Resonator, Green
5257 - Satori YD18EQ, Dreadnought Electro, Nat
5256 - Satori YD28EQ, Dreadnought Electro, Nat
5252 - Satori YD28HEQ, Dreadnought Electro, Nat
8234 - Satori YD42EQ Electro Acoustic
5255 - Satori YO28HEQ, OM Electro, Natural
8047 - Takamine AN16 Dreadnought, Pre-Owned
8289 - Tanglewood 55 VS Acoustic Guitar
7973 - Tanglewood Michael Sanden Master Design
8288 - Tanglewood TW1000N Acoustic Guitar
8343 - Tanglewood TGRSFCE Electro Acoustic
8363 - Tanglewood TSF CE Acoustic Guitar Red
8346 - Tanglewood TSF CE Black
8345 - Tanglewood TSF CE White Electro Acoustic Guitar
8032 - Tanglewood TSF CE Natural
7984 - Tanglewood TSFCE XB Cutaway Electro
7993 - Tanglewood TVC KOA C Cutaway
4194 - Tanglewood TW115AS Dreadnought
4180 - Tanglewood TW130 ASMCE Orchestra Natural
8292 - Tanglewood TW15 NS Accoustic Guitar
4195 - Tanglewood TW15 ASM, Solid Mahogany
7991 - Tanglewood TW15NS Dreadnought
8331 - Tanglewood TW47E Electro Acoustic
8293 - Tanglewood TW55N Accoustic Guitar
8328 - Tanglewood TW55VS Super Jumbo, VS
4191 - Tanglewood TW73 Parlour Electro Sunburst
8221 - Taylor W12CE Electro Acoustic, Pre-Owned

For full guitar details, pricing and photos, enter the number next to each guitar model into our SKU search facility on the website.

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Let's get on with the show...

What could any right-minded human being have against lots of exciting new gear? Nope, we don't understand it, either. Anyone who has ever attended a guitar show will know that it can be a test of endurance (for your feet and your eardrums, if nothing else). But there's nothing like getting that 'kid on Christmas morning' feeling as you walk along and see a vast array of gear you can actually get your hands on and check out for yourself (most of the time, if you ask nicely).

We did just that at this year's mammoth NAMM show and we're back with a report to help you browse any potential future purchases and generally keep you abreast of the guitar world.

And there's plenty of other string-driven value to be wrung from this issue. Gibson, Fender and Martin releases are among the reviews on offer, while Richard Thompson and Michael Schenker deliver top-notch quotage in their respective *G&B* interviews. Those of a learning persuasion should get themselves down to our Steve Vai and Deep Purple workshops with all due haste. If you prefer to proceed at a more leisurely pace and stop off at the vintage section and ponder all things of a classic nature - heck, well, that's what we'd call good living. Above all else, we hope you enjoy the issue...

John

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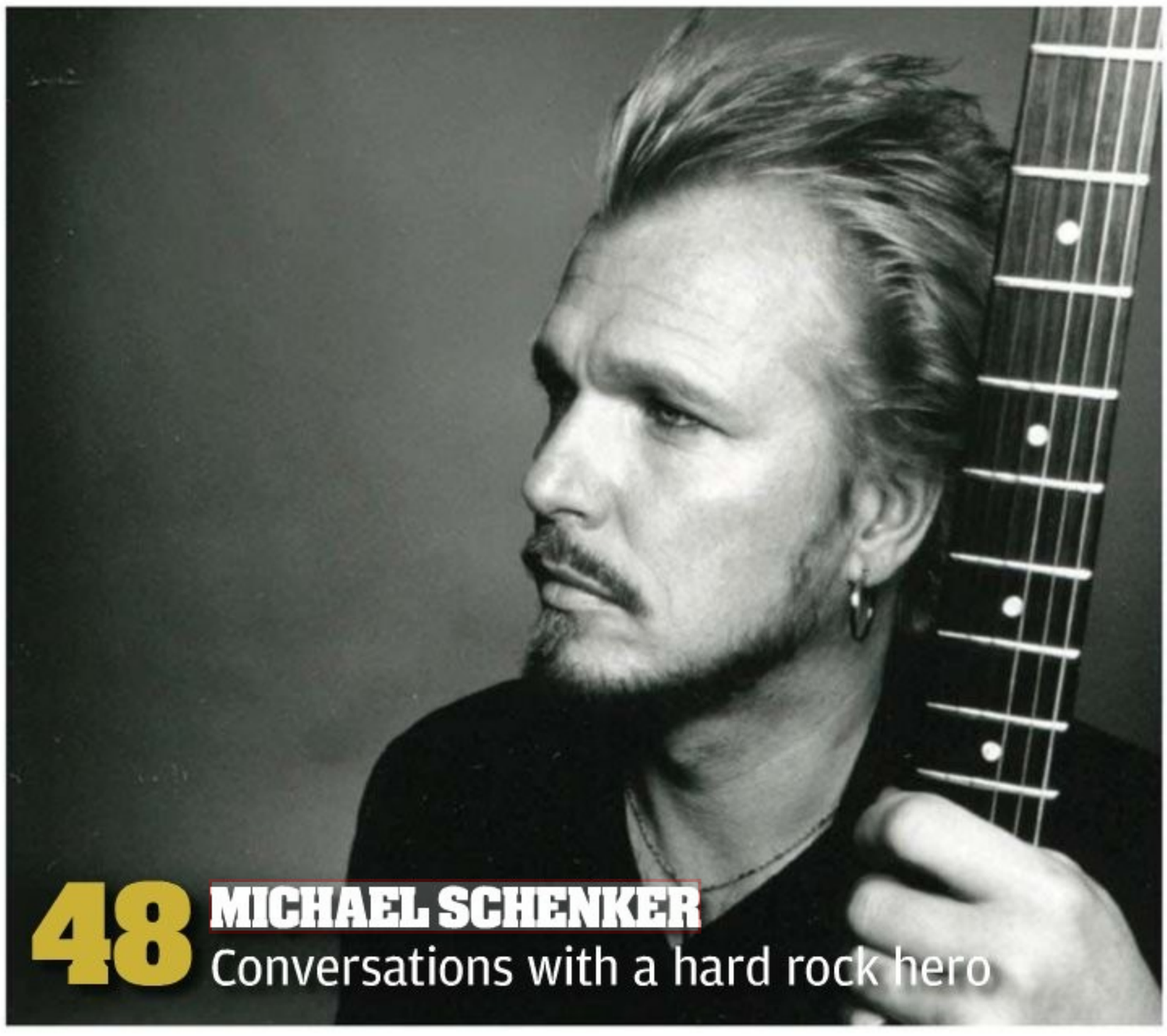

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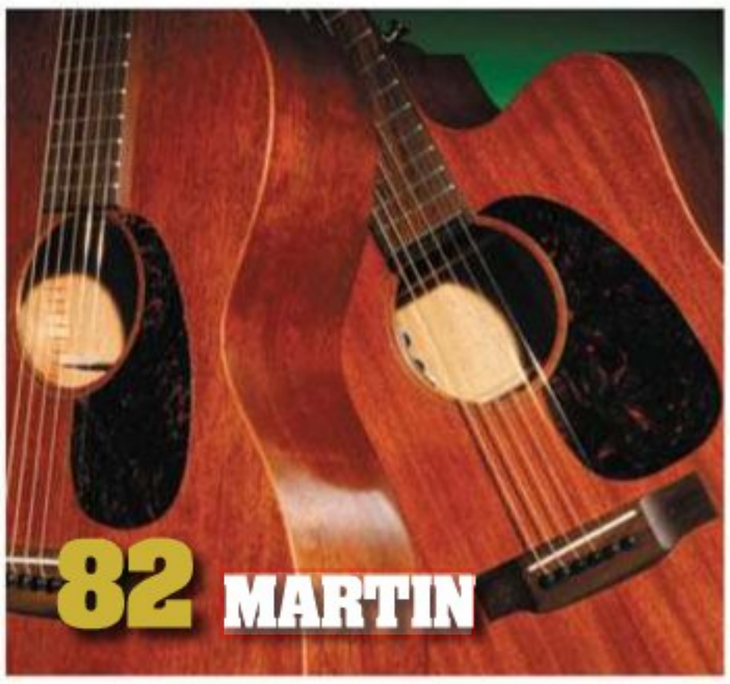

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Vintage

Hooked On Classics 96
The player in your heart says one thing, the collector in your head says another. Phil Harris, who's been there and done it, waxes eloquent on the perils of restoring vintage gear

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During Sid Bishop's time serving the guitar-playing community at the legendary Top Gear on Tin Pan Alley he sometimes found himself in slightly bizarre circumstances...

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Reverberations

Write to *Guitar & Bass*, Anthem Publishing, Station House, Station Approach, 33 North Street, Carshalton, SM5 2HW or e-mail us: guitarandbass@anthem-publishing.com
Please note, we reserve the right to edit where we feel it is appropriate, or to print extracts from longer correspondences

STAR LETTER

TOP OF THE BILL

Nice to see the feature, and the follow-up, on my old Wakefield buddy, Bill Nelson. I was lucky enough to attend Art College at the same time as Bill, and we became good friends - I used to go up to his house and he would play the most fabulous Chet Atkins runs on his Gibson ES-355 Stereo.

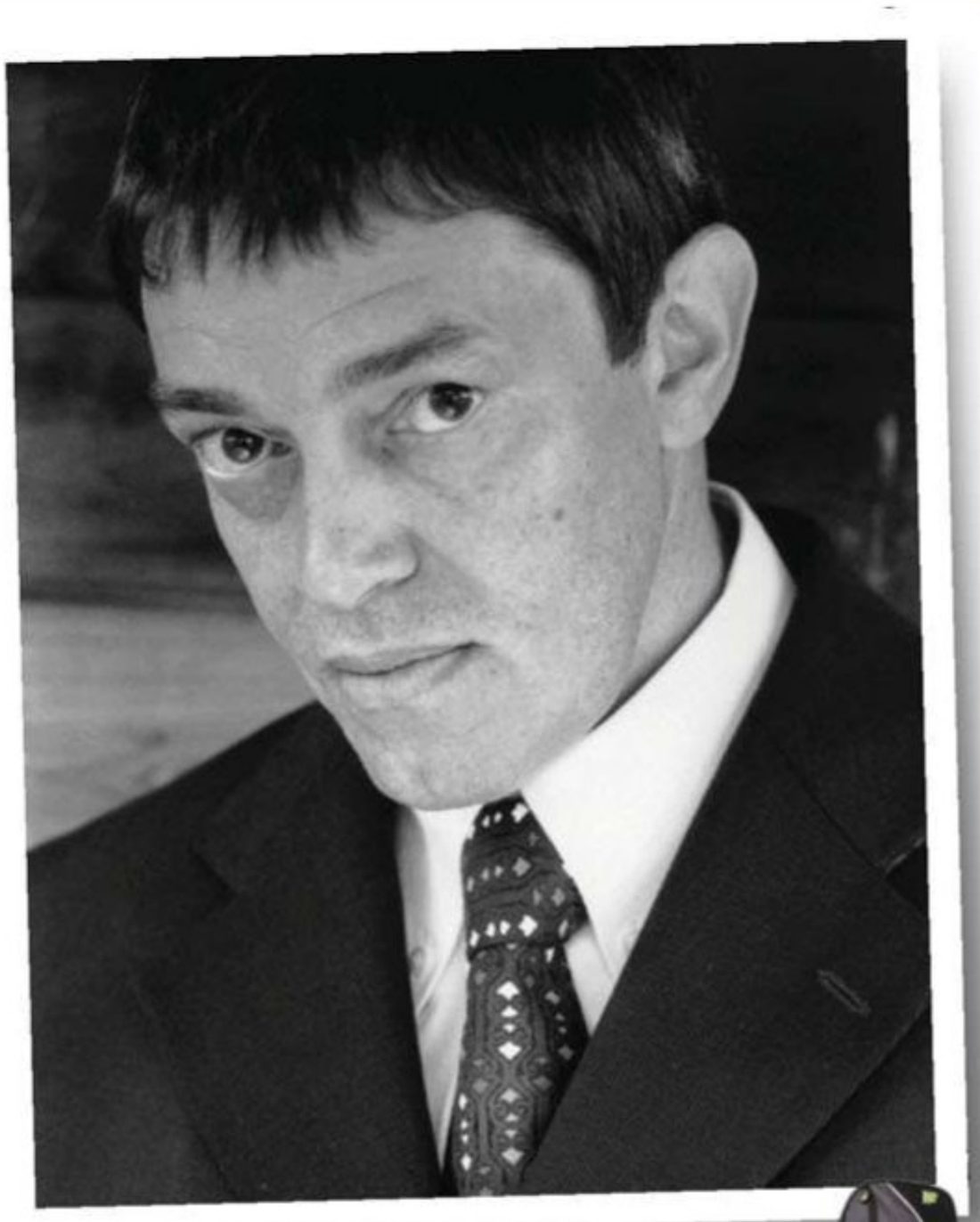
A tale you might not have heard is when, in 1966, Bill and I were trying to get a music club going in the basement of a very old school in the centre of Wakefield. I was painting some psychedelic murals on the walls, and Bill and the rest of the band (the Gibson Four - yes, they all had Gibsons!) were rehearsing.

Unfortunately, the winter snow was just melting, and it had a detrimental effect on the earthing circuits in the basement. So when Bill went to grab the microphone whilst holding a chord, the 'belt' he got somersaulted him off the stage, and he landed in an unconscious heap on the hard floor.

As we desperately fought to revive a very ashen lead guitarist, our only thoughts were for Bill, but when he did eventually open his eyes, his first words were 'Is my guitar OK?' We assured him it was (we didn't want him fainting again) - in fact, he had landed on it, and it was now very neatly snapped at the base of the neck.

It was away at Kalamazoo for about a month, and when it came back, the neck was even better than before! And so was Bill! I went off to London a bit later, Bill formed the Brain Police - and eventually formed BeBop. You know the rest.

Nigel Daley *via email*



G&B **What a cracking tale! The bond between a guitar and its master or mistress can be a truly an unbreakable one (regardless of what happened to the neck in this case). Maybe you've told us the defining characteristic of the true guitar freak here, Nigel (ie if you were knocked unconscious, would your first thoughts on coming around be about your concern for your guitar?)**

Added to this, did the incident you describe fundamentally alter Bill, thereby setting him off on the road to success - and his living legend status? Aye, this could be a massive breakthrough for all Nelsonologists out there.

By the way, if you ever get a chance, send through some evidence of your psychedelic stuff. None of us went to art college, you see. And from the amount of guitar players that were came from that background, we think we might have missed out on something special that would've have influenced our playing.

Rosetti

Written a Star Letter? Contact Rosetti on 01376 550033 to claim your Fusion gig bag – electric, acoustic or bass available!

WE LOVE YOU ALAN, WE DO!

I know you guys always welcome good reports about organisations, shops, companies and individuals in the guitar trade. I needed some information about the wiring on a particular guitar that I was aware Alan Entwistle had a hand in designing. I searched the net to find a wiring diagram/schematic, but to no avail. While looking at the Entwistle pickups site, I noticed that his email address was there with an invitation to contact him in person. I thought 'No, he won't want little old me pestering him about an bit of wiring,' but then I reconsidered and thought 'Why not?' So I did. Even though Alan was at the other side of the world in China he replied within hours with enough info to give me the courage to dive in and fix the problem. He also took the time to answer some of my queries about Chinese guitar manufacturing. What a nice guy. He's the type of person who restores your faith in humanity. Have you done a piece on him lately? He seems to have been around since Cliff was a lad and must have some very interesting tales to tell.

Mick Sleight *via email*

G&B **Thanks for passing this heart-warming story on, Mick, and we'll raise a glass to the true gent Alan Entwistle undoubtedly is. We've talked to him over the years about various things, and I doubt we'll be strangers in the future – rest assured.**

ANOTHER BUDDY

Firstly, congratulations on your very informative and entertaining magazine. I am writing with reference to the review of the Alister Atkin guitar in the February 2012 edition of *Guitar & Bass* in which you mention his involvement with the Buddy Holly Foundation and the limited edition run of 25 'Holly' J-45 replicas.

The article states that Alister is the only UK luthier associated with this unique project -

however this is in fact not the case. Another UK-based luthier, Mick Johnson, has already finished building one of these guitars. On October 8 2011, Graham Nash presented the guitar on stage at the Royal Albert Hall to his former Hollies colleague Allan Clarke.

You can see Graham Nash with the guitar - which incidentally is named 'Peggy Sue Got Married' - on the home page of Mick's website (http://mickjohnsonguitars.com), and if you venture a little deeper you'll also find a gallery of photos of the instrument.

Each guitar in the series is individually named with a Holly song title, and each has the somewhat dubious honour of being clad in a removable hand-engraved leather jacket - by way of authenticity!

Mick is currently building guitars in the same series for Marty Wilde and Mike Berry - 'It Doesn't Matter Any More' and 'Tell Me How' respectively - with two more in the pipeline for Status Quo.

Mick is an absolutely first class luthier - I know because I have several of his instruments - with an incredibly prestigious client list. Truly one of the unsung heroes of British guitar building. I hope your readers will check him out.

Pete Lincoln *via email*

G&B **We promise both Mick and yourself that we meant no harm by the omission – just acting on information received. Any luthier involved with the Buddy Holly Foundation deserves some serious respect.**

LONG LOST TELEGRAM

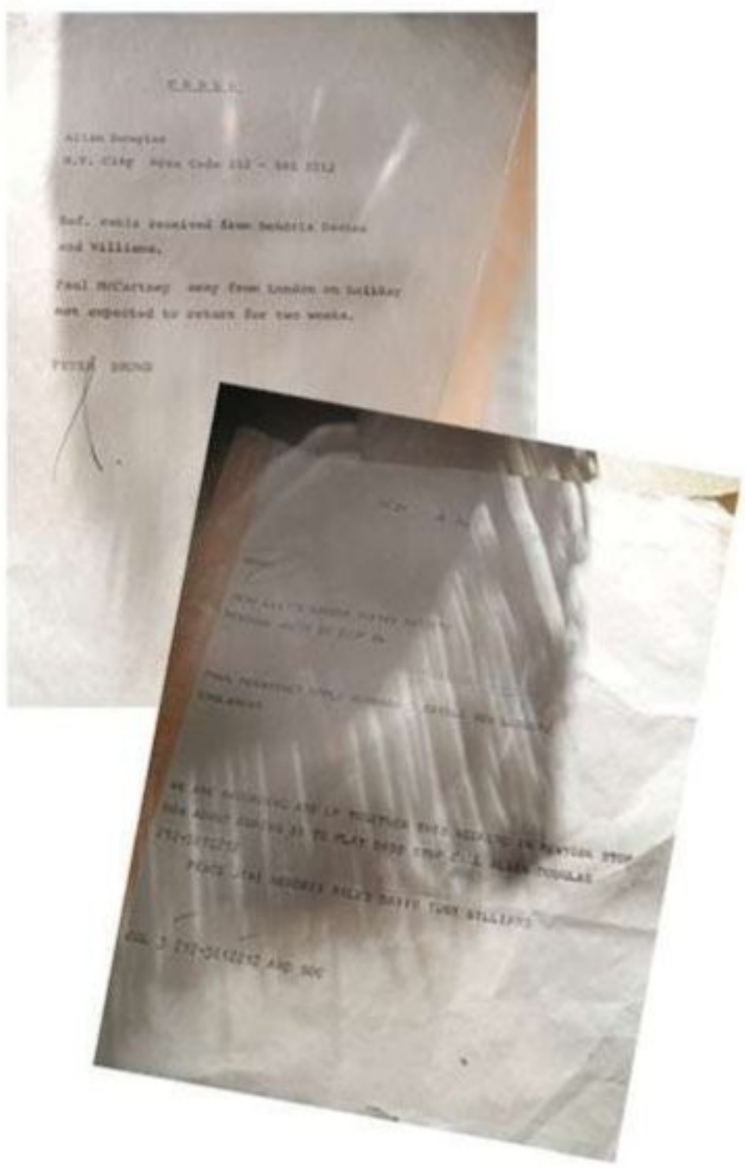
I am a French Hendrix fanatic! In 2005, I found the following on the Hard Rock Cafe website (Key West, Florida): Telegram dated 10/21/69 sent by Jimi Hendrix to Paul McCartney. The message reads, 'We are recording an LP together this weekend in NY. How about coming in to play bass... peace, Jimi Hendrix, Miles Davis, Tony Williams.' Today, still looking for a shot of this amazing document, I just found the telegram is on display in Hard Rock Cafe Prague (Czech Republic) accompanied by a response from Peter Brown saying Paul is away on holiday for two weeks!

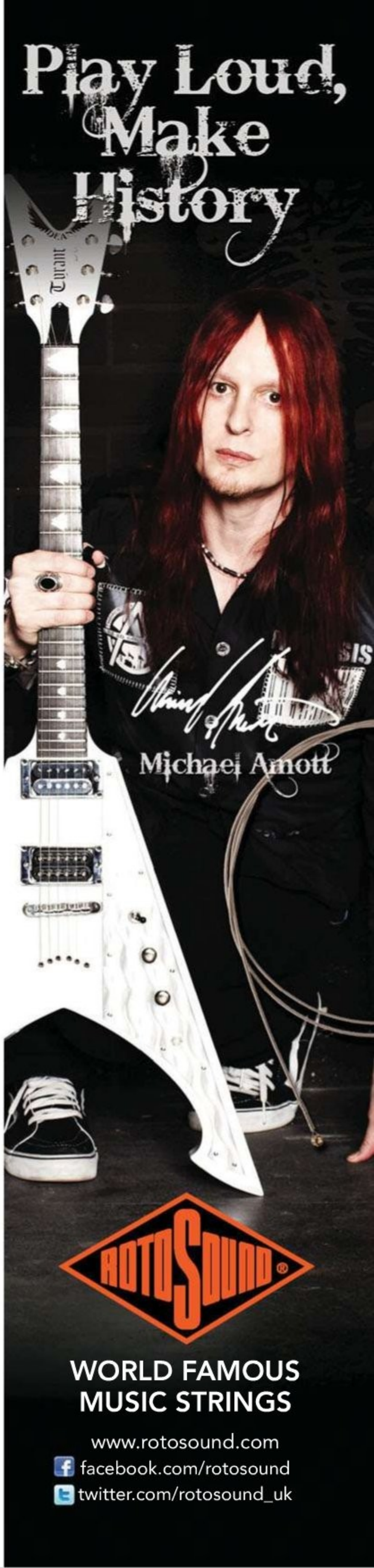
Finally, Hard Rock Cafe Paris sent me a shot of the telegram yesterday. I think Paul McCartney has never been informed about it!

I know Hard Rock Cafe has thousands and thousands of pieces of memorabilia, but there was no mention ANYWHERE about this document before for 43 years...

Yazhid Manou *via email*

G&B **Many thanks for sending this to us, Yazhid, and congratulations on your successful detective work. Telegrams between famous musicians – now that's a whole other lifetime ago. And if that session had taken place, who knows what might have been...**





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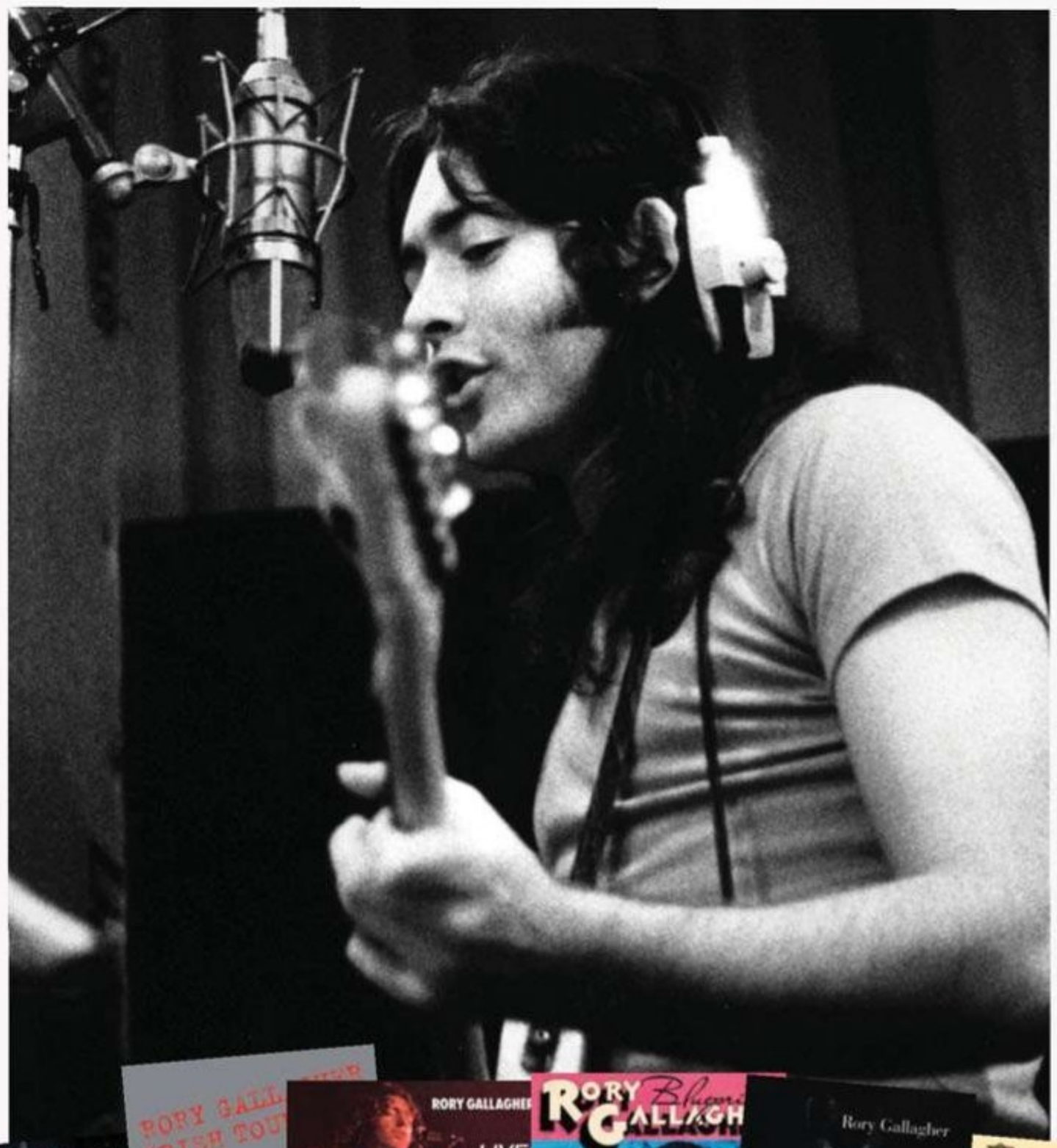
Woke up this mornin'... NEWS

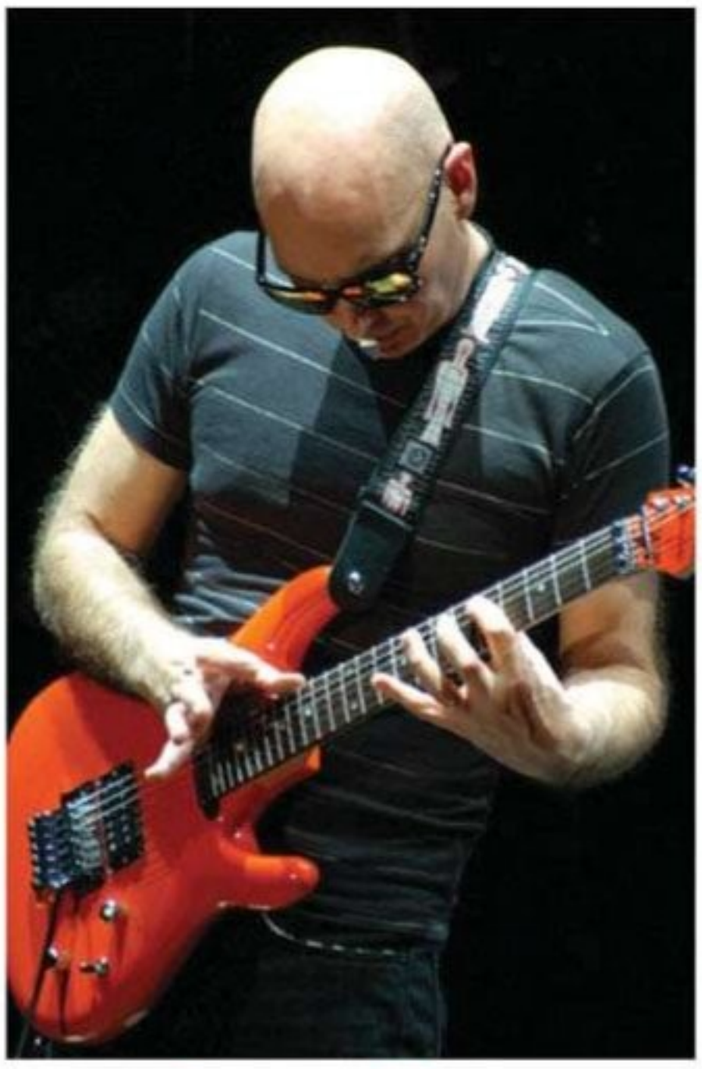


Rory Remastered

Rory Gallagher's first six albums are set to be reissued to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the release of his debut solo album

It's time to raise a glass to Irish legend Rory Gallagher, and what better way to toast the 40th anniversary (though technically it's the 41st!) of the beginnings of one of blues-rock's most passionate and natural talents than to reissue the first six of his awe-inspiring solo offerings?

Hailed by ex-Smiths legend Johnny Marr as the man who made him want to play a guitar, described by the Edge as 'astonishing' and loved by Slash in equal measure, Gallagher is without doubt one of the most expressive and influential guitarists ever to have lived. Now Sony, together with Capo and Legacy, is releasing the re-mastered albums in chronological order starting with 1971's *Rory Gallagher* and then going on to *Deuce* (1971), *Live In Europe!* (1972), *Blueprint* (1973), *Tattoo* (1973) and ending with 1974's *Irish Tour '74*. 'We've aimed to release them in the spirit of the original release by going back to the vinyl artwork and original 1/4" tapes so that they look and sound exactly as Rory intended,' says Rory's nephew Daniel Gallagher, who produced the reissues. Each album features original artwork and liner notes written by Rory's brother and former tour manager Donal Gallagher, rock snapper Mick Rock and journalist Roy Hollingworth. These albums represent a very prolific period for Rory and are seen by many as his best. See www.rorygallagher.com for more info.



Satch in the cinema

CinemaLive has announced that visionary guitarist Joe Satriani will be showing his concert film *Satchurated: Live In Montreal* at selected UK cinemas – but on March 6 and for one night only. The sold-out performance was filmed at the Metropolis in Montreal during the *Wormhole* tour in support of his *Black Swans And Wormhole Wizards* album. Grammy and Emmy award-winning concert filmmakers Pierre and Francois Lamoureux employed 10 different cameras to capture the magic, and they recorded it in both 2D and 3D for your viewing pleasure. Pay a visit to www.cinemalive.co.uk to find out when and where it's showing.

STAR FOR MACCA

Beatles legend Paul McCartney has taken his place alongside the greats with a star on the Hollywood Walk Of Fame. The unveiling ceremony took place outside the front of the Capitol Records building, where McCartney was introduced to a crowd of adoring fans by Neil Young. 'Way back in history, in Liverpool when we were kids and we were listening to Buddy Holly and all the rock'n'roll greats,' said McCartney, 'I would have never thought that the day would come when I'd be getting a star on the Hollywood Walk Of Fame.' Macca will be performing at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee tribute concert outside Buckingham Palace on June 4 along with other names including Elton John, Cliff Richard and Annie Lennox.

NAMM REPORT INSIDE!

Guitar & Bass visited Anaheim in LA in January to bring you the best of new gear that the show had to offer. Go to page 16...

Bruce gets wrecked

Settling down? No chance. Bruce Springsteen's angry and politically-charged 17th studio album *Wrecking Ball* will be released on Columbia Records and is due to hit the shops on March 6. The Ron Aniello-produced album features 11 brand new tracks and features special guest appearances from guitarist extraordinaire and activist Tom Morello and Pearl Jam drummer Matt Chamberlain. 'Bruce has dug down as deep as he can to come up with a vision of modern life,' said Springsteen's long-time manager Jon Landau. 'The lyrics tell a story you can't hear anywhere else, and the music is his most innovative of recent years.' A special edition version will also be available with two bonus tracks, exclusive artwork and added photography.

MR AND MRS

Johnny Cash and June Carter, Tina and Ike, Sonny and Cher, Derek Trucks and Susan Tedeschi... married couples have always played a part in shaping the landscape of music. In the case of husband-and-wife musical team Les Paul and Mary Ford it was a truly winning partnership. During their illustrious career together they had their own NBC Friday night radio program, presented a primetime daily TV show which ran for three years, racked up a total of 16 Top 10 hits (with two number ones), pioneered recording techniques, received a star on the Hollywood Walk Of Fame... all in all, a pretty cool couple, we think you'll agree. So when Gibson made them look about as thrilling as plastic figurines stuck fast to the top of a wedding cake, awkwardly holding their electric guitars and grinning inanely, it's a wonder their cred didn't slip at least a little. Turns out the guitars they're holding didn't do half badly after all, either...

Calendar SHOWS, GIGS, FESTIVALS, WORKSHOPS

Walter Trout UK tour

MARCH 8-16

US blues rock guitarist Walter Trout is touring to support the release of his new album *Blues For The Modern Daze* (Provogue). Expect old-school blues as Trout revisits his roots.

WHERE? **Leeds Variety (8), Sheffield O2 (9), Clitheroe Grand (10), Salford Lowry (11), Bristol Tunnel (15), Tavistock Wharf (16)**
TICKETS **See venues**
CONTACT **0844 478 0898; www.thegigcartel.com**

Newcastle Guitar Show

MARCH 11

Buy, sell or trade new and secondhand gear at this excellent show. Exhibitors include Roland, Patrick Eggle, Vintage and Fret-King, and enjoy live acts from the Mitch Laddie Band and Gavin Coulson.

WHERE? **Federation Brewery, Dunston, Gateshead**
TICKETS **£6**
CONTACT **01925 813185; www.guitarshows.co.uk**

Bristol Folk Festival

MAY 5-7

As well as headliners Show Of Hands, Cara Dillon and Afro Celt Sound System, this year's event features artists from the city's '70s alt-folk label Village Thing reuniting to perform on the same stage once again.

WHERE? **Colston Hall, Bristol**
TICKETS **£80 (three days); 0117 922 3686**
CONTACT **www.bristolfolkfestival.com**

Guitar Weekends open day

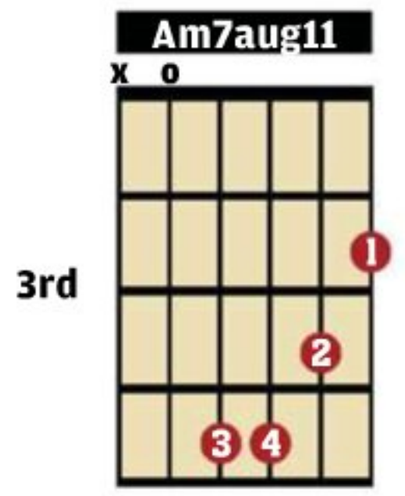
MAY 6-7

The new director of Guitar Weekends is inviting guitarists to attend an open day in the Cotswolds to meet the event's tutors.

WHERE? **Cotswold Conference Centre**
TICKETS **N/A (offering a first year discount price for residential weekends of £45 – just quote code 'Guitarmag12')**
CONTACT **01931 713241; info@guitarweekends.co.uk**

The Lost Chord

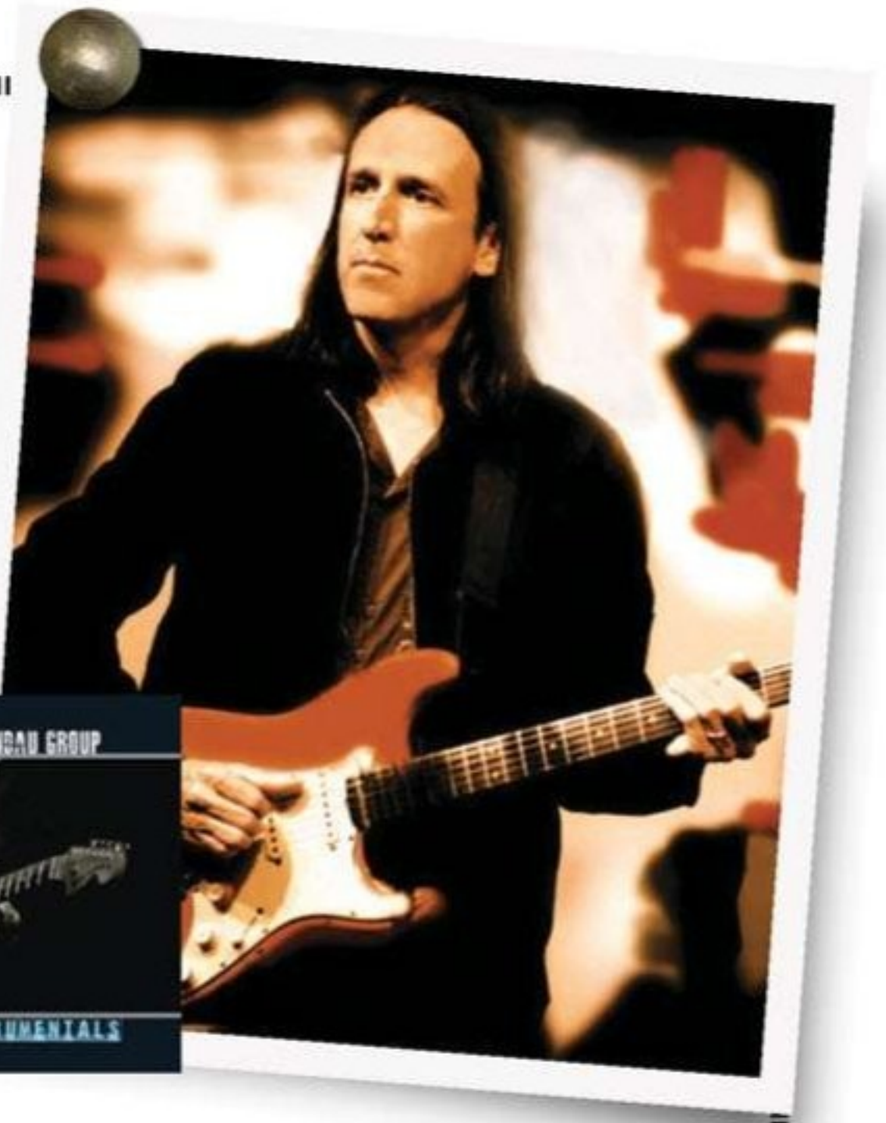
This suspenseful voicing of Am7aug11 could also be thought of as a Cm on the top four strings over an A bass note – so Cm/A. Try resolving the tension in this chord with the basic open D chord. If you look closely, the top two notes in this Am7aug11 chord will move down a semitone to the top two notes in the D chord.



Soundtrack of my life

Michael Landau

We asked a man lauded for his fine instrumental guitar work to pick out his own fave vocal-free six-string listening



Landau has mesmerised guitar fans for years with his cultivated phrasing and distinctive tones, and some have heralded him as one of the greatest-ever session men. It's often said that Landau played on anything up to half of the major-label releases that came out of Los Angeles during the '80s and '90s, alongside other regulars like Steve Lukather and Dann Huff. Michael's work as a member of supergroup Renegade Creation in 2010 was a timely reminder of his remarkable skills, and his latest album *Organic Instrumentals* is yet another a captivating tour de force of imaginative fretwork.

The Ventures

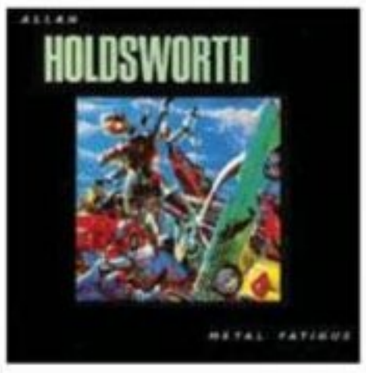
WIPE OUT

This was the first record I bought. I remember riding my bike to the record store and buying the single - I think I was nine years old. I wasn't really playing guitar yet, it was all about the drums then. The first song I learned to play on guitar, though, was *Walk Don't Run*. Vinyl and surf guitar... the good old days!

Allan Holdsworth

METAL FATIGUE

Robben Ford once said that Alan Holdsworth is the John Coltrane of guitar, and I'd have to agree. He's really in a league and category of his own. Besides the brilliant playing, his compositions are on another level. There's a song called *Home* on this record, a beautiful lyrical ballad. He truly has his own voice.



Latin Playboys

LATIN PLAYBOYS

I love David Hidalgo! He's the guitar player in Los Lobos. This was a side project he did in the early '90s. This record really had a strong effect and influence on me sonically - I just about wore it out. It's not an instrumental record, but the first song, *Viva La Raza*, is. It's the modern sound of East Los Angeles.

Robben Ford

TIGER WALK

Robben Ford is another guitarist that to me really does have his own very unique voice on the guitar. There's a great soulful tune called *Freedom* on this record. It's just an old Telecaster plugged straight into a Dumble amp, but that alone can sound fantastic. Tone and feel for days!

Jimi Hendrix

LIVE AT WOODSTOCK

What does one say about Jimi Hendrix except 'thank you'? Again, this isn't an instrumental record, but the song *Villanova Junction* is a beautiful piece. A stack of 100W Marshalls with a Fuzzface and Univibe blazing away in the early morning - I just wish I could have been there to experience it in person.

The Derek Trucks Band

LIVE AT THE GEORGIA THEATRE

The song *Sahib Teri Bandi/Maki Madni* really shows Derek's brilliant blend of blues and Northern Indian classical music, both so similar in emotion, both being devotional music. I would have to pick out Derek and Kirk Fletcher as my favourites of the younger generation of guitar masters.

Web corner THIS MONTH'S VIRAL GUITAR CLIP

Squarepusher: *Solo Electric Bass 1*

http://bit.ly/HQTqb

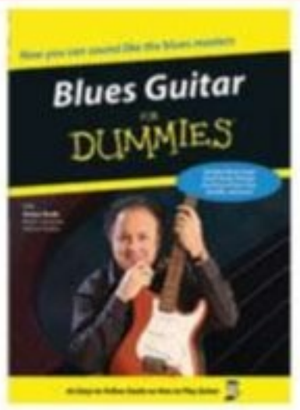
Squarepusher (aka Tom Jenkinson) is mostly known for the experimental electronic music he puts out on the avant-garde label Warp. However, he's also an exceptional bassist, as proven by this awesome display of four-string dexterity. The clip was filmed by David Saugy and is taken from Squarepusher's *Solo Electric Bass 1* album, recorded live at the Jazz a la Vilette festival in Paris in 2009.

DVD of the month

Blues Guitar For Dummies

ARLEN ROTH

4 Digital Media



Roth guides us neatly through easy-to-follow tutorials from basics like tuning and simple techniques through to 12-bars, shuffles, barre chords and more, until finally closing on fun, popular blues classics.

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– Paul Riario, Guitar World Magazine

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Album reviews

Stephen Dale Petit
THE BBC SESSIONS
333

James Bracken's instrumental blow-out *Steppin' Out* kickstarts this compilation of three BBC sessions from 2007 to 2009 and sets the scene for a real gem of a listen. A bruising rendition of *7 Cent Cotton* from his debut LP is rootsy and raw; Mick Taylor joins in for a languid, slide-heavy reworking of Robert Johnson's *Love In Vain*, and fans will enjoy an informative interview that wraps things ups nicely.

Rich Robinson
THROUGH A CROOKED SUN
Circle Sound

Rich Robinson puts his day job in the Black Crowes far behind him for this deeply honest and touching blues-folk record. His kind of expression doesn't require Crowes-esque posturing or macho-riffs; there's a dusty quality to this that demands the exact opposite. Gentle grooves, drifting pop sensibilities and an atmosphere that few could conjure mark this out as a truly human experience.

UFO
SEVEN DEADLY
Steamhammer

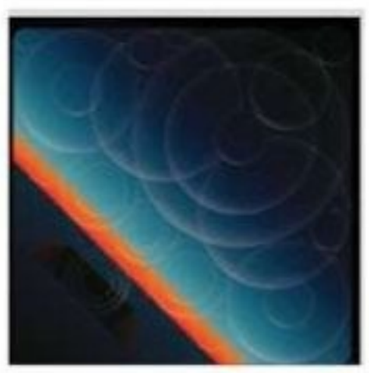
UFO have always been a Brit-rock workhorse, but as is proven by *Seven Deadly*, the quality of their output never wanes. This album is crammed full of sweet-toned belters. *Wonderland* is a chunky rocker, *The Last Stone Rider* is a free-riding delight and closer *Waving Good Bye* is a tempered, Hammond-infused folk-rock epic that explores a nice palette of sounds. A firm-footed road-rocker that does the business.

Flying Colours
FLYING COLOURS
Mascot

Deep Purple's Steve Morse and Mike Portnoy (ex-Dream Theater) put their heads together for this new project and thanks to the smooth pipes of Casey McPherson, Neil Morse's floating keys and Dave LaRue bass, the result is a record to revive the spirits. Rock, prog, metal and pop all take their place around the table and the conversation is both measured and lively. A talented quintet with a big LP under their belts.

The Mars Volta
NOCTOURNIQUET
Warner Bros

Now we're talking. Sure, the Mars Volta's sixth studio album is a challenging listen, but the schizo-beats, slanted melodies and sporadic electro toe-dipping by no means detract from the duo's undeniable brilliance. When these two fuzzy-haired prog visionaries mine obscure subject matter and combine it with scatterbrained musical otherness magic ensues. Dip in, and get lost.



The Blues Band
THE BEST OF THE BLUES BAND
Repertoire

Hot on the heels of their *Few Short Lines* album comes a whopping 41-track double CD Best Of that's sure to get fans of the genre smiling. This is an awesome reminder of a tenure that's lasted three decades, with tracks handpicked from 13 albums. The band never changed its line up, and it shows from the hefty, surefooted slice of British blues on show here. No doubt about it, this is one hell of a CV.

SNAP JUDGEMENTS

Oli Brown
HERE I AM
Ruf
Brown's clear affinity with the six-string is undisputed and with *Here I Am* he's still on a skyward trajectory. His is a clean-cut, unfussy, melody-laced blues

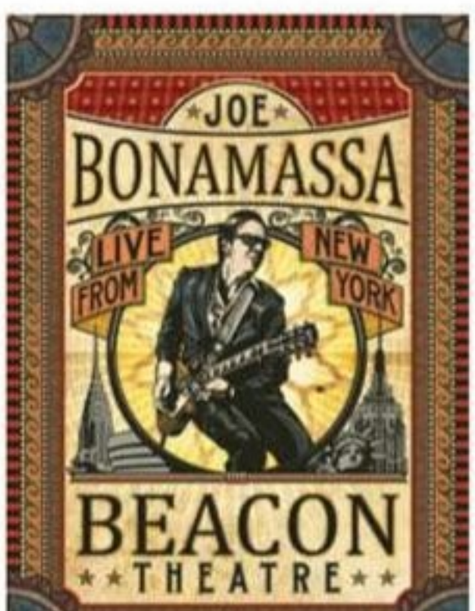
Mitch Laddie
BURNING BRIDGES
Mystic
Gritty, purposeful and impassioned, Laddie possesses an unhinged quality that separates him from the usual suspects. A young gun with some serious angle

Soulfly
ENSLAVED
Roadrunner
Max Cavalera's gruff vox tells the story of slavery while driving tribal axe-smithery has us crushed against a wall harder and louder than ever before

Spiritualized
SWEET HEART SWEET LIGHT
Double Six/Spaceman
Seven albums in and Spiritualized sound as relevant as ever. Lyrically awash with hope, musically sumptuous. Damaged layers of perfection

Tony MacAlpine
TONY MACALPINE
Favoured Nations
One Ibanez, one sonic wizard. MacAlpine is hyperspace-bound with speed-fretting and false harmonics aplenty. One for lovers of technique-heavy space rock

Wallis Bird
WALLIS BIRD
Rubyworks
Here, the disturbingly talented Bird depicts the claustrophobia, chaos and craziness that permeates our lives with a touch all her own. Unmistakable



Bonamassa's Beacon

Provogue Records have announced the release of *Joe Bonamassa: Beacon Theatre - Live From New York* for later this month on DVD and Blu-Ray. The two-disc set takes in 24 tracks chosen from Bonamassa's various albums and features some cracking guest appearances to sweeten the deal. Beth Hart joins Bonamassa on stage for two stunning duets from last year's collaborative *Don't Explain* album, Grammy-winning US guitarist John Hiatt trades some licks, and Free's iconic rock vocalist Paul Rodgers stretches his ample vocal cords too. Joe Bonamassa begins a UK arena tour at the Brighton Centre on March 23 and closing at Blackpool Opera House on April 5th. See www.jbonamassa.com for details.

Book of the month

Squier Electrics: 30 Years Of Fender's Budget Brand
TONY BACON
Backbeat

At last: with the help of some classy photography, Bacon guides us through Squier's colourful history from square one through to its 30th birthday, taking in the original collectable gems, some more adventurous designs, signature models and info for collectors. Smart.

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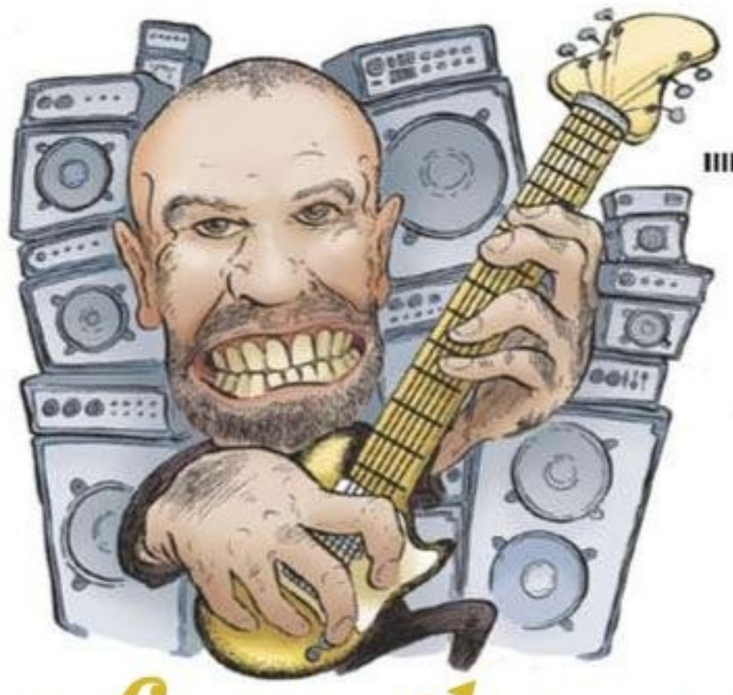

Tales from the road

Turning Japanese

Gone are the days when Japanese guitars were considered below par. Adi Vines puts his money where his mouth is

After a slow start, the touring season has started to gather momentum and we're in Japan again. Our itinerary allowed us just a single afternoon free of work duties, and as I had a colleague with incurable GAS and a red-hot credit card burning a hole in his pocket, a visit to Tokyo's Meidai Dori, the city's Denmark Street, seemed to be the best way of spending this free time.

We had never had the chance to browse around this street before, and with 20 shops to choose from we set off hoping that luck would provide us, in their homeland, with a nice old Tokai or Greco and perhaps – fingers crossed – a '70s vintage Ibanez Iceman or two.

We were destined to be disappointed. There seemed to be no lawsuit-era LP copies. The few vintage pieces we could find were American desirables, at prices that would make a London West End guitar dealer blush. The only Japanese items were a couple of Yamaha SG1000s dating from the '80s. A nice Stuart Adamson/John McGeogh vibe, of course, but not what we had set our hearts on.

Although the average Japanese guitar store is a well-stocked, wondrous place that puts most UK shops to shame, the emphasis is very much on new products. Fender Japan, Yamaha and Ibanez have a strong presence, but other less well-known native guitar brands like Fernandes, Edwards and Orville are making fine and popular instruments. The Orville brand, up until the late 1990s, was an authorised Gibson licensee, and as such their replicas of famous US instruments proudly displayed the legend 'Orville by Gibson' on the headstock. (No prizes for guessing why the brand was named Orville.)

Since the Japanese got their guitar act together in the late 1970s and started beating the big American players at their own game, the phrase 'Made in Japan' is no longer code for second-rate (the best Strat I have ever played was a Fender Japan product). Many guitars that were originally only intended for the Japanese market have gained strong cult followings in the West, and our guitar snobbery has moved on to items from China, Korea, India and Indonesia. Take Burny, for example. I was first made aware of this company through Steve Jones of the Sex Pistols, who turned to using their LP Custom copies when he was, allegedly, snubbed by Gibson. Although new Burnys are now Chinese and are priced accordingly, early examples are very collectable and many still-made-in-Japan later versions are well regarded, too. Mr Jones and Gibson obviously made up their differences as his signature Custom was introduced as a limited edition in 2008 but its rarity and price put it out of my league.

> Since the Japanese got their guitar act together, 'Made In Japan' is no longer code for second-rate

I was therefore delighted to find, in the last shop but one on Meidai Dori, a 1990 Burny LP Custom in antique white. It's pretty worn (real relicing: cool!) but it's MIJ, with solid mahogany body and one-piece set neck, 'lightning bolt' headstock inlay and original pickups and hardware. The fingerboard is rosewood not ebony but I prefer the former anyway, and that makes it an interesting Standard/Custom hybrid. All this, with a Steve Jones connection thrown in, for the Yen equivalent of £168. Who says quality guitars aren't cheap anymore?

Adi Vines has worked with Radiohead, the Sex Pistols, the Darkness, Razorlight and others. See www.xselectronics.co.uk

SECRET SHOPPA

BACK ALLEY MUSIC

CHESTER

CONTACT **01244 322229**
www.backalleymusic.co.uk

If you need gear on a Sunday in the Chester area of Cheshire, Back Alley Music forgo their Sunday roast from 11.00 am until 4.30pm. 'The rest of the week is 9.30am until 5.30pm,' says assistant Michael James. 'You'd be surprised how busy the Sunday trade can be sometimes.' Back Alley Music is well stocked with a host of major guitar and amps brands, while making sure all aspects of music styles – including alternative and traditional – are well looked after

Layout

Though all on one level with 'The Pit' dedicated to acoustic guitars, this store is certainly a lot bigger than the quaint old-style shop front suggests

Range of gear

Good choice and a plentiful display of the popular models from Fender, Washburn, Ibanez, Stagg, Crafter, Gretsch, Yamaha, Squier, Jackson, Dean, Tokai, Hofner, Hamer, Hagstrom, PRS, Schecter, Aria, Vintage, AXL, Shine, Cort, Hohner, Lag, Takamine, Simon & Patrick, Recording King, Ozark, Savannah, Brunswick and Eko. Amps are provided in most formats from the likes of Fender, Line 6, Orange, Laney, Roland, Vox, Ibanez, Dean Markley, Stagg, Randall, ZT and Yamaha

Secondhand gear

'It's always turning over, but hard to predict – although there's always a good deal in here somewhere,' says Michael

Best bargain in the shop

Certainly plenty to choose from. A 2010 Fender Big Apple Strat with case looked tempting at £599, and a Music Man StingRay bass from the same year, with case, just topped a grand

Highlight

In-house repairs handle most guitar problems from set-ups to snapped headstocks, and tuition is on hand in the shop on selected evenings

Conclusion

Although it wasn't Sunday, Back Alley Music was buzzing on our visit and it was obvious that the staff enjoy coming to work each day to keep the shop's reputation as a fab gear hub in Cheshire

VITAL STATISTICS	
Layout	18/20
Staff knowledge	19/20
Staff helpfulness	19/20
Range of new gear	18/20
Range of secondhand gear	15/20
Parking	side streets
TOTAL	89%

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FENDER

Slick Jagger

Last year the Tele hit 60; this time round **FENDER** celebrated the birth of another classic with their new 50th Anniversary Jaguar. It's a hybrid of old and new with 24" scale length, pitch-improving neck-angle pocket, high-output single-coils and three finish options (£1,942.80). A second Jaguar came in the form of the Johnny Marr Signature with Bare Knuckle single coils and re-positioned blade-style four-way pickup selector. This cool guitar is available in olympic white or 'metallic ko', inspired by faded candy apple red (£1,942.80).

Also charming the onlookers were five delectable electrics in the new US-made high-end Select series. As well as being seductive on the eye with figured tops and custom finishes, these guitars deliver on tone via Fender's specially-voiced Select pickups. Models include a flame maple-top bodied Stratocaster in a luscious dark cherry burst finish (£2,062.80), a Stratocaster HSS pumped up with a humbucker on the bridge and with an elegant antique burst finish (£2,062.80), a violin burst Telecaster with honeycomb-chambered ash body (£2,170.80), a Carved Maple Top Telecaster with amber burst finish and a Carved Koa Top Telecaster with sienna edge burst finish (£2,518.80). All Select six-strings have a Bi-Flex truss rod system, 22 medium jumbo frets, rear headstock 'Fender Select' medallion and gloss-lacquer finishes.

Following in the footsteps of the Cobain Jaguar is the Kurt Cobain Mustang with angled single-coil neck pickup and Seymour Duncan JB humbucker at the bridge, dual on-off/phase in-out switches and poly-finished alder body finished in fiesta red, sonic blue or dark Lake Placid blue with stripe (£1,006.80). Also showcased were three additions to the Blacktop series, a Stratocaster HSS, a Baritone Telecaster (both pictured top right) and the Jaguar 90.

SQUIER

Mean Teles

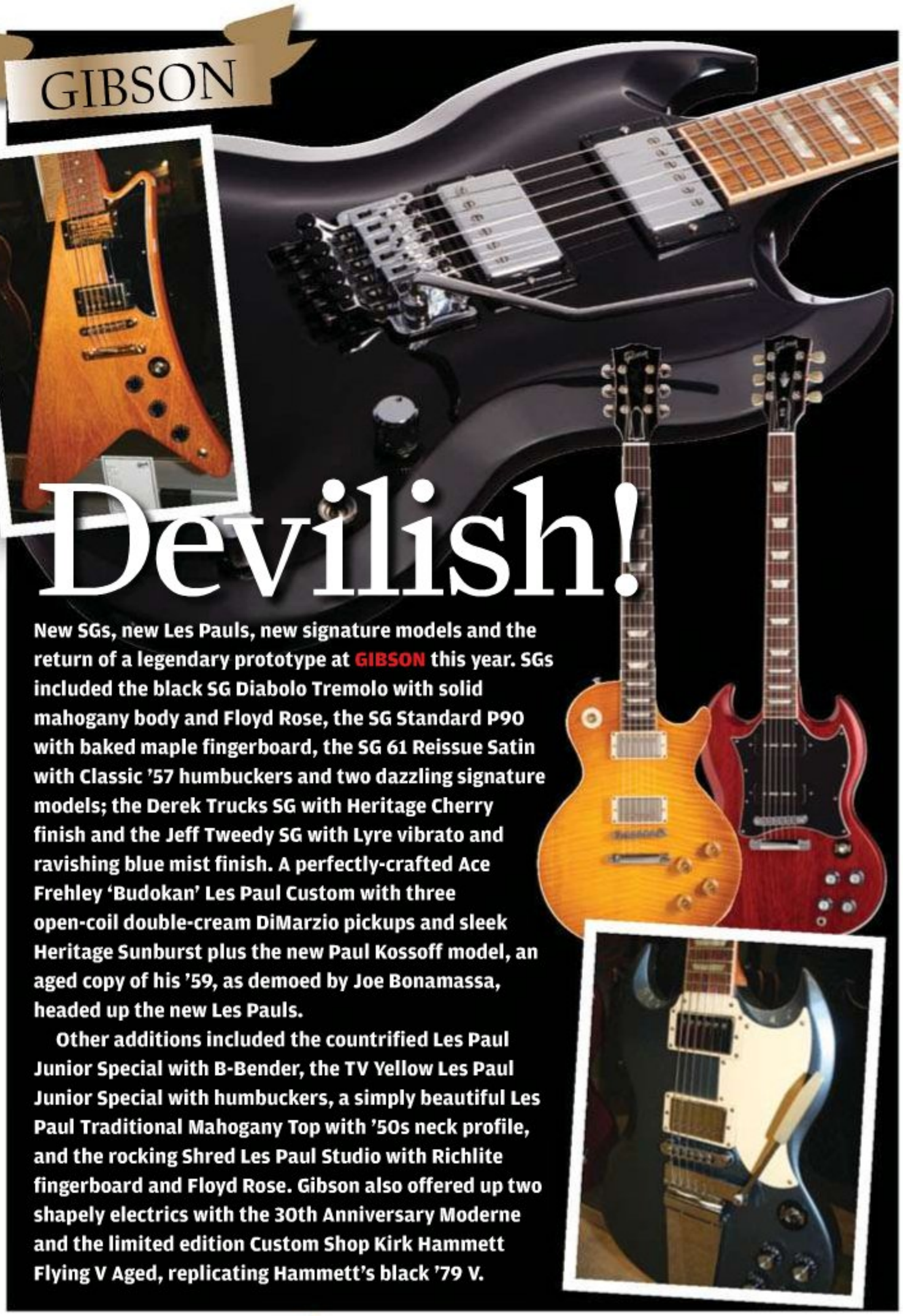
Two modish Telecasters at the SQUIER booth this year; the punked-up all-black Avril Lavigne model with 12th fret skull and crossbones inlay (£358.80) and the monochrome Jim Root Tele, with passive humbuckers and an understated satin matte finish (£406.80). New in the Vintage Modified Series are a '70s Strat (£322.80), the hot-rodded Telecaster Special (£334.80) and the Surf Stratocaster with lipstick pickups (£334.80), the Strat HSS (£274.80) and a revamped Strat (£274.80).

DANELECTRO

Turning heads at the DANELECTRO booth was their characteristically off-the-wall Hodad, making a welcome return to their stable this year. This jovial model features jangle-friendly lipstick humbuckers, coil tap and out-of-phase pull switches on the volume knobs, a diecast bridge with individually adjustable saddles and arrives in either blue metallic, red metallic or black. Surf's up!

GIBSON

Devilish!



New SGs, new Les Pauls, new signature models and the return of a legendary prototype at GIBSON this year. SGs included the black SG Diabolo Tremolo with solid mahogany body and Floyd Rose, the SG Standard P90 with baked maple fingerboard, the SG 61 Reissue Satin with Classic '57 humbuckers and two dazzling signature models; the Derek Trucks SG with Heritage Cherry finish and the Jeff Tweedy SG with Lyre vibrato and ravishing blue mist finish. A perfectly-crafted Ace Frehley 'Budokan' Les Paul Custom with three open-coil double-cream DiMarzio pickups and sleek Heritage Sunburst plus the new Paul Kossoff model, an aged copy of his '59, as demoed by Joe Bonamassa, headed up the new Les Pauls.

Other additions included the countrified Les Paul Junior Special with B-Bender, the TV Yellow Les Paul Junior Special with humbuckers, a simply beautiful Les Paul Traditional Mahogany Top with '50s neck profile, and the rocking Shred Les Paul Studio with Richlite fingerboard and Floyd Rose. Gibson also offered up two shapely electrics with the 30th Anniversary Moderne and the limited edition Custom Shop Kirk Hammett Flying V Aged, replicating Hammett's black '79 V.

FRET-KING

FRET-KING's new Black Label Series is headed by some great instruments built in collaboration with guitar pros. The top-spec Elise 'GC' (Gordon Giltrap) has a chambered body, WVC humbucker/ WP90 pickups and a figured maple top. The Corona 'GW' (Geoff Whitehorn) has an interesting trio of pickups (P90, single-coil, Wilkinson 'Prizefighter humbucker). Lastly the Eclat 'DBC' (pictured) from Dave 'Bucket' Colwell has a single Wilkinson dogear pickup, and is ideal for players with rock leanings. All are available in standard models, too!

HAGSTROM

Catching our eye were three new beauties from HAGSTROM – the Tremar Deuce-F, the Viking Baritone and the Viking DLK 12-string, returning after a 45-year hiatus. The elegant Tremar Deuce-F (pictured) has a chambered mahogany body, 'Tremar' tremolo and Hagstrom Custom '58 humbuckers. The semi-hollow Viking Baritone offers a maple top and three gorgeous finishes, and the Viking DLX 12 share the same body but offers two Hagstrom H-50 humbuckers, a 12-string trapeze tailpiece and a dashing appearance.

EPIPHONE

Ace Served

EPIPHONE mirrored its big brother this year with the new limited edition Ace Frehley 'Budokan' Les Paul Custom. It's loaded with a trio of high-output DiMarzio humbuckers and has a period-correct three-piece maple top, clipped dovewing headstock. They've blended vintage styles with modern know-how for two semi-hollow ES-339 models: the compact ES-339 Pro has a slim-taper D profile neck and twin Probuckers with push/pull coil taps, and the Ultra-339 has two Probuckers and a Shadow NanoMag system, a built-in chromatic tuner and four outputs including USB. Also at the show were the Les Paul Tribute Plus with series/parallel switching and two Prophecy Les Paul Custom Plus models offering a choice of chunky active EMGs or Gibson USA humbuckers.

MUSIC MAN

2012 brings two fresh MUSIC MAN signature six-strings for John Petrucci and Steve Luthaker. The curvaceous new JP12 John Petrucci guitar (pictured) has a basswood body with a glossy cherry sugar finish, an ebony fingerboard and supplies some nice tone options with a HH-1 DiMarzio Liquifire (neck), DiMarzio Crunch Lab (bridge) and a piezo bridge pickup. The guitar also features mono and stereo jacks. The Steve Lukather III has an alder body, passive DiMarzio pickups with an active preamp and a nifty push/push switch for an extra 12db volume boost. Two humbuckers or an H/S/S configuration – the choice is yours.

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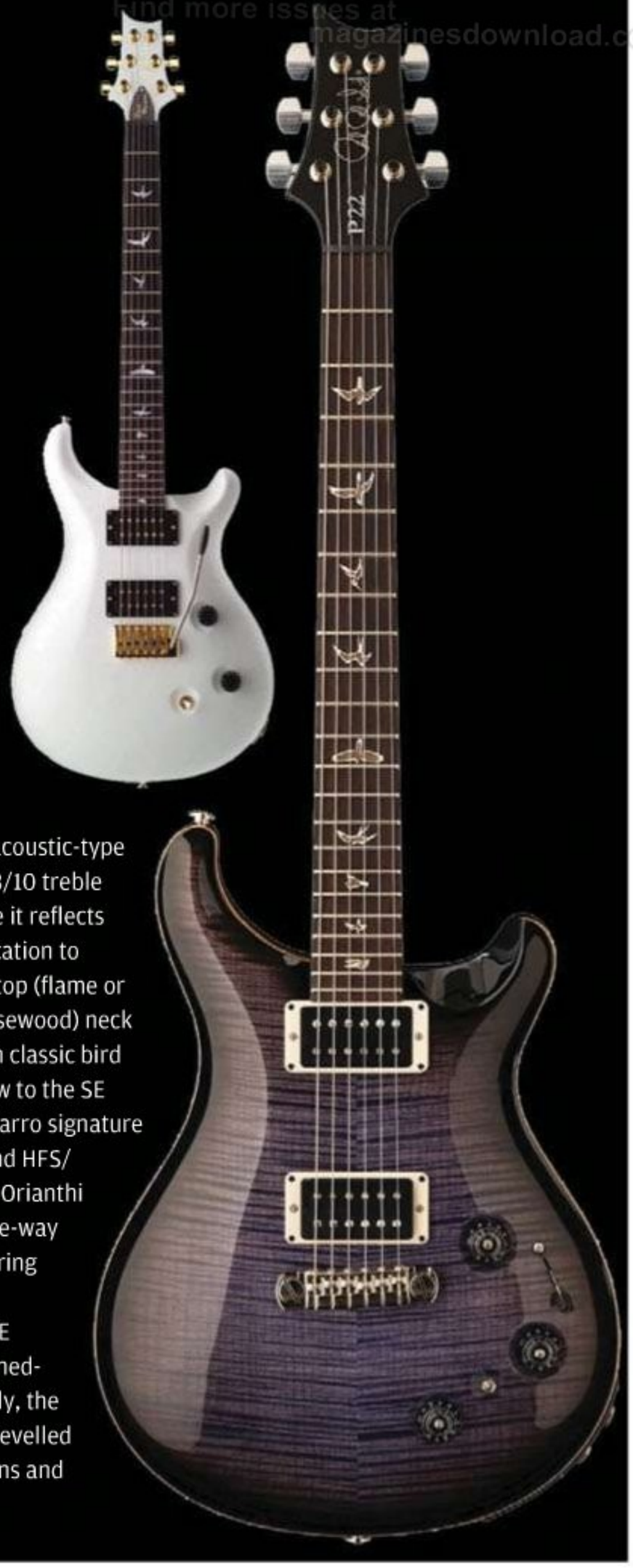
PRS

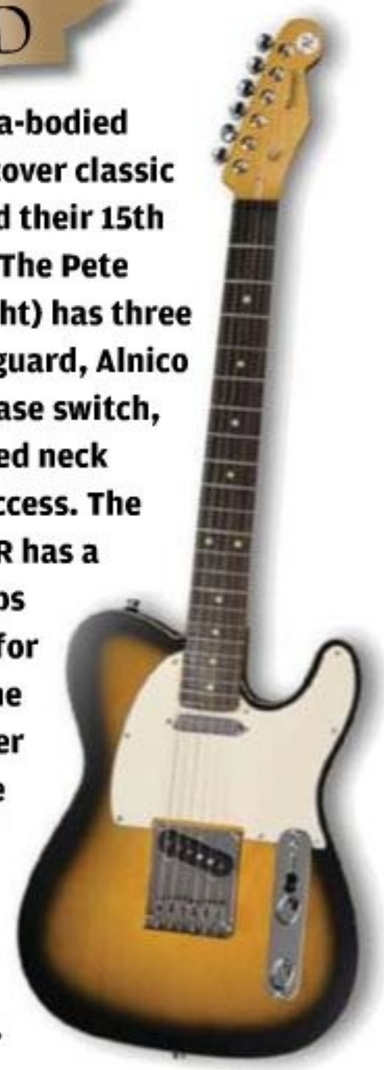
Piezo PRS

Over at **PRS** we discovered a heavenly-sounding electric fitted with a piezo plus some upgraded SE models for us to get our picks into in the new year. The new P-22 (main pic, right) is fitted with a PRS/LR Baggs piezo system for sweet acoustic-type tones as well as uncovered 53/10 treble and bass pickups. Looks-wise it reflects PRS's usual meticulous dedication to quality, with a figured maple top (flame or quilt), 22-fret mahogany (or rosewood) neck and rosewood fingerboard with classic bird inlays - definitely a winner. New to the SE range is the jet white Dave Navarro signature (top right) with bevelled top and HFS/Vintage Bass humbuckers; the Orianthi SE has received a new three-way blade switch and an alluring scarlet finish, and Nick Catanese's EMG-armed SE (left) gets a classier, toned-down makeover. Lastly, the SE Custom 24 has a bevelled top, contoured bobbins and improved switching.



REVEREND

Three dynamic new korina-bodied models from REVEREND cover classic tone, crunching metal and their 15th Anniversary celebration. The Pete Anderson Eastsider T (right) has three chambers under the pickguard, Alnico V pickups, a push-pull phase switch, a satin finish and an angled neck plate for easy high-fret access. The heavier-sounding Sensei R has a Railhammer Chisel pickups – rails under the low end for clarity and poles under the high strings for a weightier top end. Also new was the Limited 15th Anniversary flame-topped Flatroc complete with Bigsby B-50 vibrato and 15th fret Limited Edition inlay.



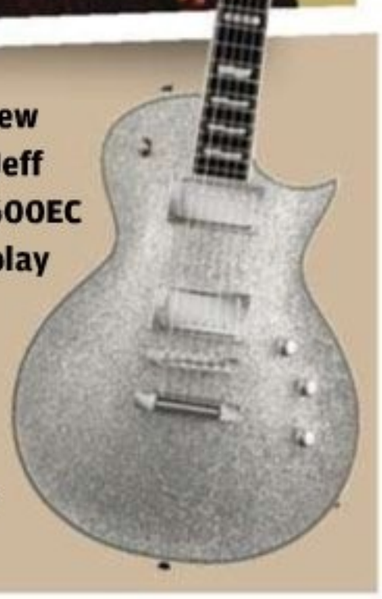
WASHBURN

Two very different hollowbodies touched down at WASHBURN. The sumptuously distressed HB36 (pictured) has an aged body and hardware, flame maple back and sides and a spruce top (£516). More contemporary is the all-mahogany HB17CB with florentine cutaway, matte black finish, all-black hardware and active humbuckers (around £384). The new N7 Nuno Bettencourt 7-string has aged alder body and hardware, reverse headstock, Stephens cutaway and a powerful combination of SD '59 and Distortion pickups.

ESP

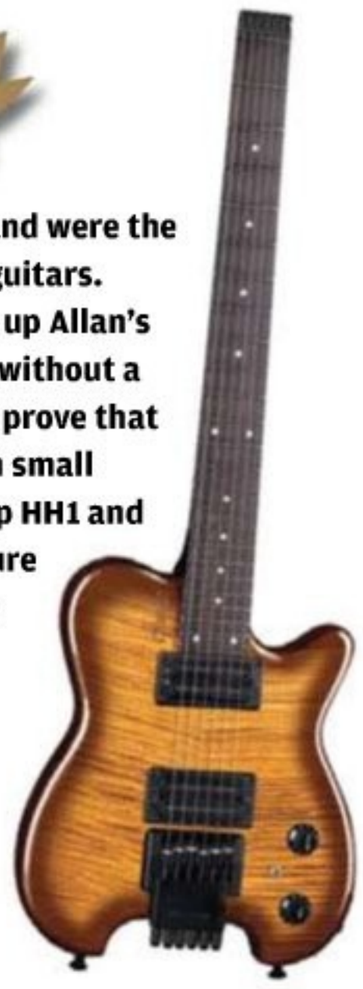
Captain Kirk

Three signature guitars for three metal heavyweights over at ESP. Kirk Hammett has a trio of new models; the distressed black LTD KH-25 (£699) celebrating a 25-year collaboration with the brand and the KH-DC (£TBC) and LTD KHDC (pictured top right; £1199), both with a new body shape and spruced-up see-through black cherry finish. Slayer's Jeff Hannemann has the Eclipse-shaped JH-EC (£TBC) and the limited JH-600EC (£1199), both with EMGs and red upside-down star inlays. Also on display was the Ltd Slayer 2012 commemorating their 1988 album *South Of Heaven* (£979). There's another heavy offering for Anthrax's Rob Caggiano: his LTD RC-600 has DiMarzios, glow-in-the-dark markers and a trans purple finish. However, our pick of the bunch was the single-cutaway Eclipse II Silver Sparkle (pictured right) with Seymour Duncan JB humbuckers... a perfect fit for the showman in all of us.



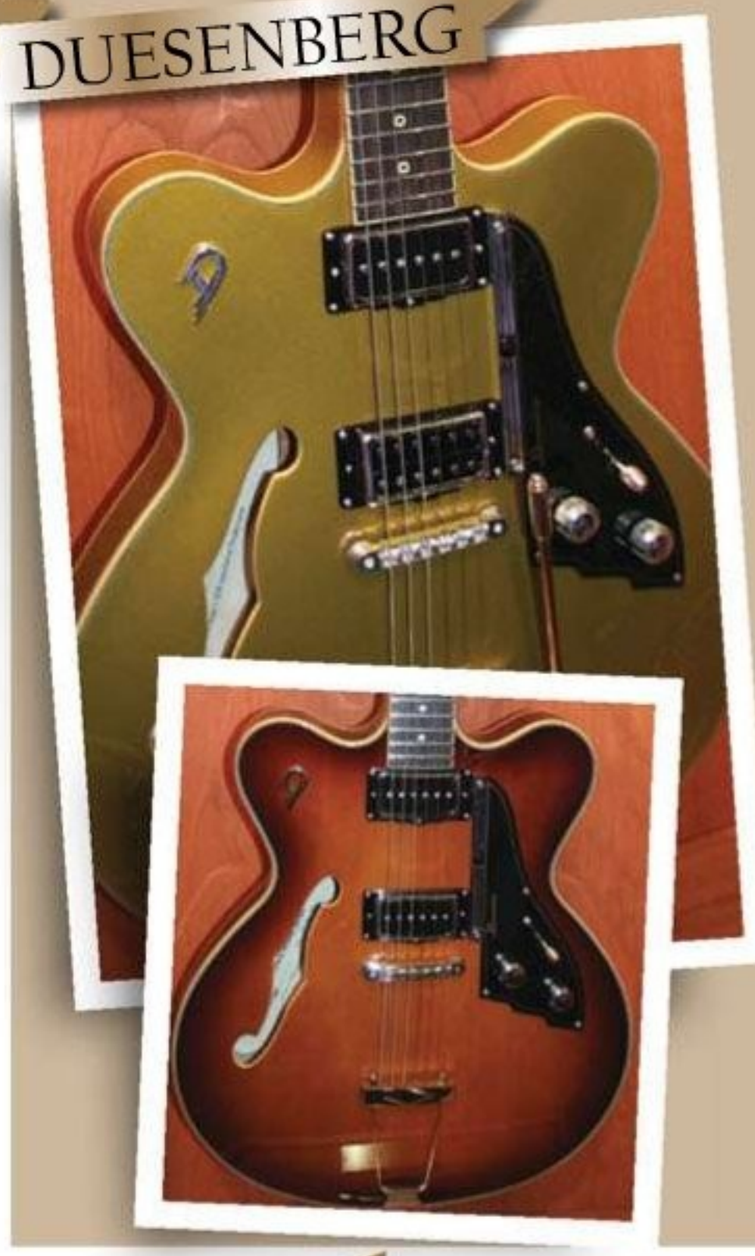
CARVIN

The buzz at the CARVIN stand were the new Allan Holdsworth HH guitars. Carvin's Custom Shop took up Allan's challenge to build a guitar without a headstock, and the results prove that the best things can come in small packages. The single pickup HH1 and dual pickup HH2 both feature a brand new bridge system (either fixed or vibrato), a chambered alder body, Allan's preferred rounder neck profile and signature H22 humbuckers. The wood and colour options are pretty vast, too.



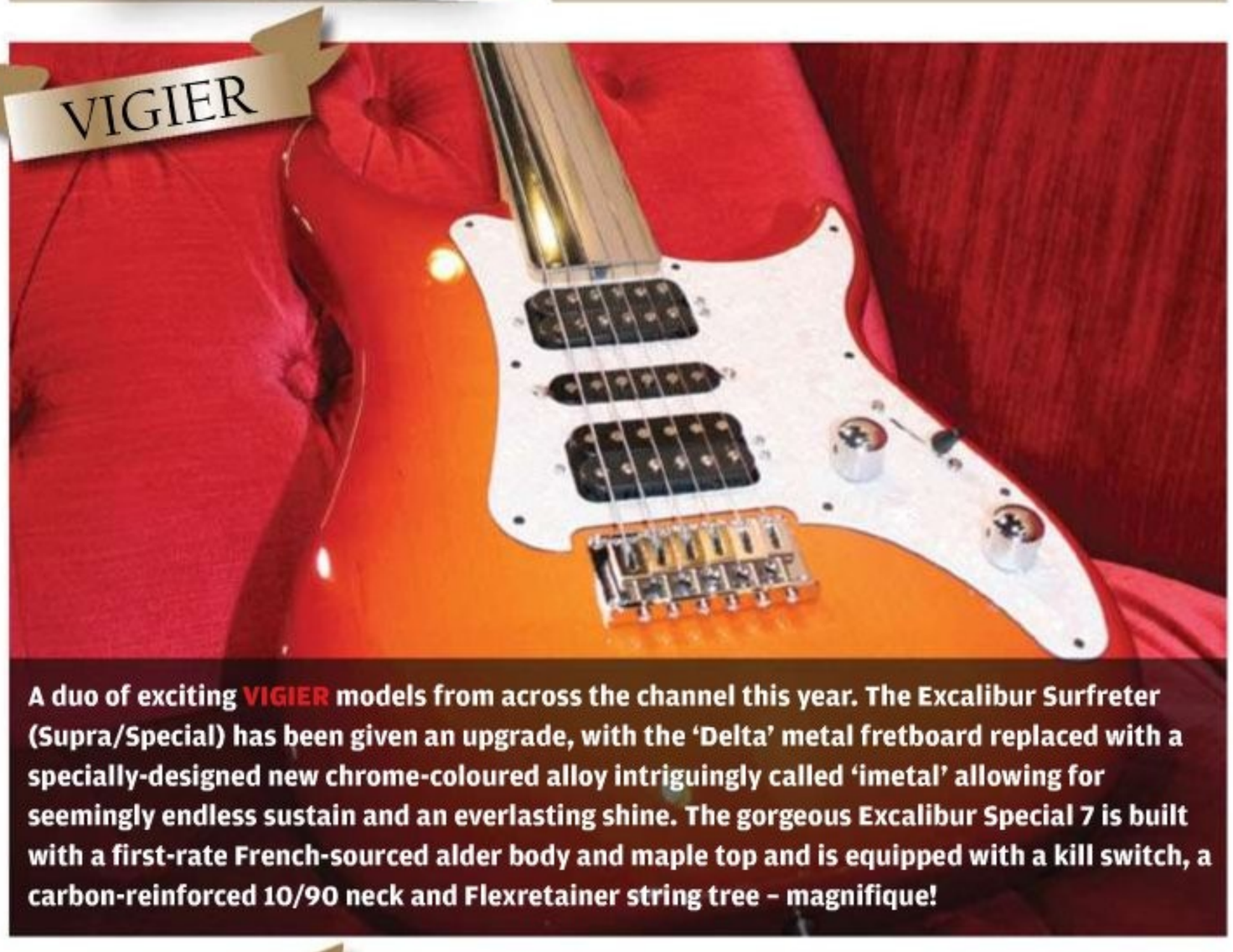
Fast Lane

DUESENBERG



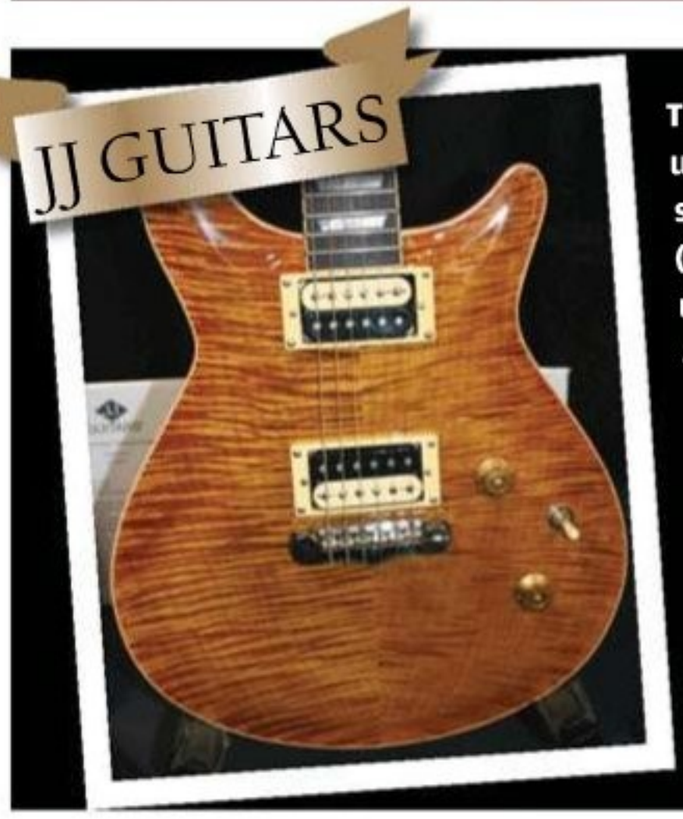
DUESENBERG continue its upsurge with four luxurious new six-strings. First up, the alluring new Eagles 40th Anniversary has a sleek all-over gold body with three-dimensional wings on the lower half, 'Eagles' inlays stretching down the fingerboard and gleaming silver-plated hardware (£3250). Smooth operators should like the look of the stately new Starplayer TV Custom with black finish, gold hardware and three D-Tron pickups (£1895), and there's something for those who prefer more traditional fare with the Fullerton Hollow Series (£1999), powered by two Domino P90s and seductive on the eye with a vintage burst finish.

VIGIER



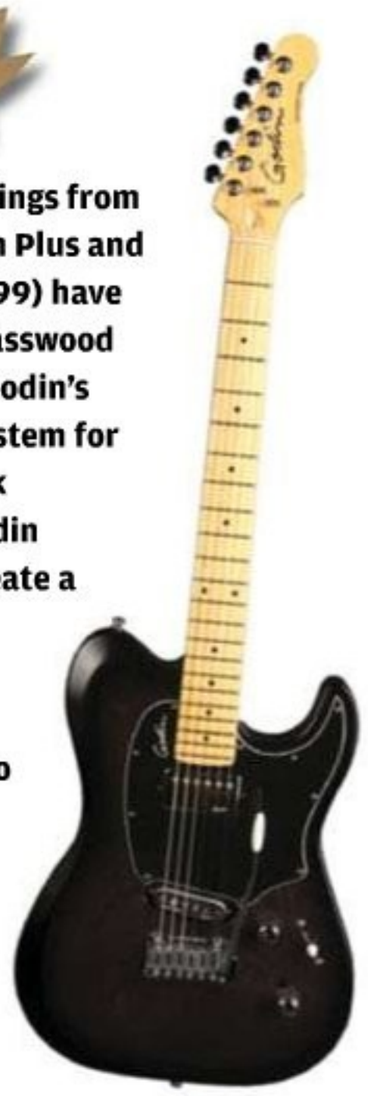
A duo of exciting VIGIER models from across the channel this year. The Excalibur Surfreter (Supra/Special) has been given an upgrade, with the 'Delta' metal fretboard replaced with a specially-designed new chrome-coloured alloy intriguingly called 'imetal' allowing for seemingly endless sustain and an everlasting shine. The gorgeous Excalibur Special 7 is built with a first-rate French-sourced alder body and maple top and is equipped with a kill switch, a carbon-reinforced 10/90 neck and Flexretainer string tree – magnifique!

JJ GUITARS



The brand new Custom Works Retrolux VM Ultra HB unveiled at the JJ GUITARS booth is sure to cause a stir with their 'Original Multi Switch' six-position (yes, six-position) pickup selector giving you ultimate control over your tone (it's also available as a retro fit). The guitar is lovingly crafted using high-class ingredients, from the top grade Brazilian mahogany and premium ultra-grade maple top (quilted or tiger stripe) to jewellery-grade MOP inlays, African ebony veneered headstock face and East Indian rosewood fretboard. A a classy Kalahari flame finish and pair of Bare Knuckle Mule humbuckers seal the deal (£2895 with Lite Flite case).

GODIN



A duo of modish new six-strings from GODIN for 2012. The Session Plus and Session Custom (around £699) have single-cutaway Canadian basswood bodies and are fitted with Godin's High-Definition Revoicer system for perfect clarity. A Godin neck humbucker and the new Godin Custom Cajun single coil create a nice tonal palette to play with, and their Tru-Loc tremolo system allows players to adjust the vibrato arm. Also on display was Joseph Arthur's tasty new custom-art series 5th Avenue CW Kingpin II – sheer eye candy.

PARKER

The state-of-the-art ATG-6 Auto-Tune MaxxFly Guitar is the result of a collaboration between PARKER and ANTARES. It takes an everything-in-one approach with Antares instant self-tuning technology (with an array of alternate tunings), Solid-Tune Intonation, a host of guitar and pickup models to choose from and a canny virtual capo with a two-octave range. Lastly, a MIDI interface opens up a whole new world of choices.

PEAVEY

Another Antares-based self-tuning guitar comes in at a mere £500, and this time it's PEAVEY with their new AT-200 model. Simply activate the Autotune technology via the tone control and the AT-200 cleverly rights itself at the touch of a button. Antares' Solid-Tune Intonation System keeps a close eye on the pitch of each string, correcting where it sees fit and ensuring playing perfection. Other features include two Peavey USA design passive humbuckers, a dual-action torsion rod and sleek looks with a choice of black or metallic red finishes.

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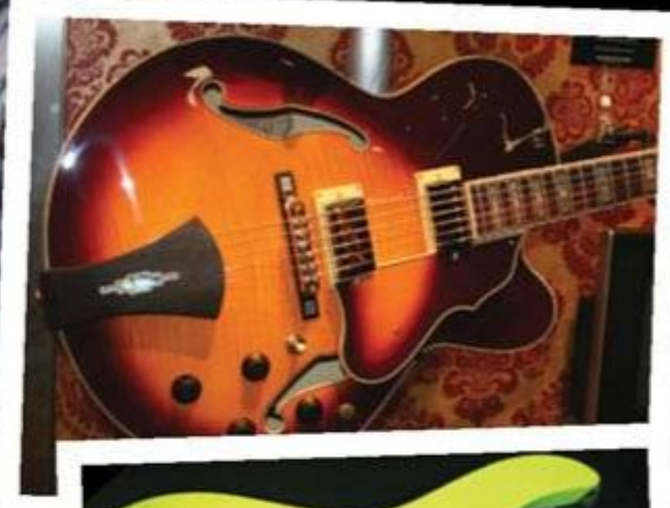
IBANEZ



Ibanez filled out its booth with a whopping 28 new electrics, including new models from the Prestige and RG Premium series as well as fresh ART, SA and GRG guitars. Above left is one of 100 special tributes to Steve Vai's original Jem/Evo (over $10,000, we're told). Top right is the eye-catching LGB300-VYS George Benson archtop in vintage yellow sunburst (£3619). Pictured centre is the RG1XXV, one of four glow-in-the-dark, hair rock-friendly Premium models celebrating 25 years of the RG and S Series; these certainly attracted attention from all sides. Shown bottom right are the good-looking and affordable FR320 (£349), the new Steve Vai JEM70V-SFG in sea foam green with DiMarzio H/S/H pickups (£1089) and the claro walnut-topped S970CW-NT from the Premium Series. Black paint is the order of the day for the RG2627ZE-BK 7-string with EMGs (£1399) and the RG2228A-BK 8-string with DiMarzios. Metallers will admire the vampiric 7-string X Series XG307 with its stonking AH37/AH47 humbuckers.

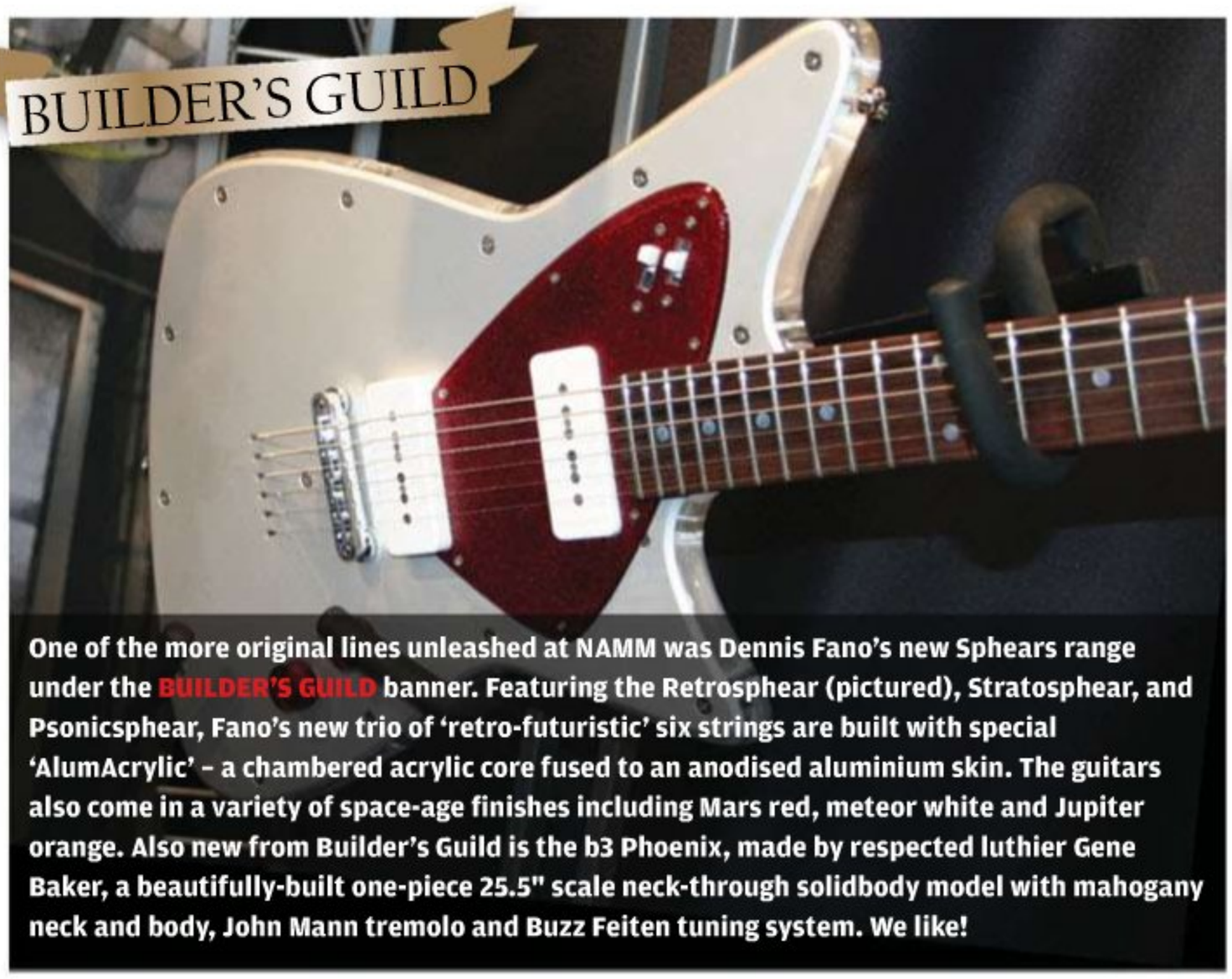
SCHECTER

Some heavy hitters from SCHECTER this year. First is the speedy Blackjack SLS series (right), with slimmer body style, slim satin necks for tricky shreds, ultra-access neck joint, MOP 12th fret 'Hell's Gate' skull inlay and a choice of Seymour Duncan Full Shred/Jazz or Blackouts AHB-1 pickups. There's also a model with a Sustaniac. More horn-throwing comes with the new neck-through Hellraiser Extreme collection with ebony or flamed maple fretboards and black chrome-covered EMG Actives. Finally, check out the Special Edition Aviation line for 'Rumble In The Jungle' and 'Bomb Shell' graphics.

EKO

A dapper new thin-bodied semi-acoustic model from EKO this year should suit most styles of music. The Mia SA ST has a hollowbody arched top body with a Linden top, maple low-profile neck for comfort, a pleasingly-designed 'M-hole', a choice between tremolo or stoptail bridge and two humbuckers with splittable coils. The Mia SA ST is available in a stark black or more traditional sunburst and is finished off with a 12th-fret MIA logo inlay.

BUILDER'S GUILD



One of the more original lines unleashed at NAMM was Dennis Fano's new Sphears range under the BUILDER'S GUILD banner. Featuring the Retrosphear (pictured), Stratosphear, and Psonicsphear, Fano's new trio of 'retro-futuristic' six strings are built with special 'AlumAcrylic' – a chambered acrylic core fused to an anodised aluminium skin. The guitars also come in a variety of space-age finishes including Mars red, meteor white and Jupiter orange. Also new from Builder's Guild is the b3 Phoenix, made by respected luthier Gene Baker, a beautifully-built one-piece 25.5" scale neck-through solidbody model with mahogany neck and body, John Mann tremolo and Buzz Feiten tuning system. We like!

HUBER

Nick HUBER makes gorgeous instruments. His new limited run full-size semi-acoustic Rietbergen guitars (above left) come with curly mahogany bodies with flame maple top and back, ebony fretboards, perfectly-crafted dolphin inlays and a pair of gold Haussel humbuckers. Our eye was also drawn to the dazzling limited edition 'Blue Whale' six-string that surely deserves a 'best-in-show' in the beauty stakes, even though it costs over $14,000.

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PEERLESS

Taylor Made

Jazzers unite! PEERLESS unveiled not one but two sumptuous Martin Taylor signature models at this year's event, the Maestro and the Virtuoso. The more affordable Virtuoso (main picture, left) has a laminated spruce top in antique sunburst, laminated flame maple back and sides, Indian rosewood fingerboard and a floating mini-humbucker. The upmarket Maestro has a delectable blonde carved solid spruce top, antique sunburst carved solid maple back, solid maple sides, an abalone orchid inlay on the 12th fret and a black Kent Armstrong floating mini humbucker. Both models have the volume control out of sight, hidden neatly under the pickguard.

RICHMOND

This year RICHMOND put out a variation on their Empire Mahogany by installing it with Godin Kingpin P90 soapbar pickups. This new single-cutaway model is solid mahogany with a high gloss finish, has a rosewood fretboard and features a mahogany 'ergocut' neck with a comfy played-in feel. This is a no-nonsense rock guitar with simple, effective controls – a three-way toggle switch, one volume, one tone – and an impressive price (£525).

DEAN

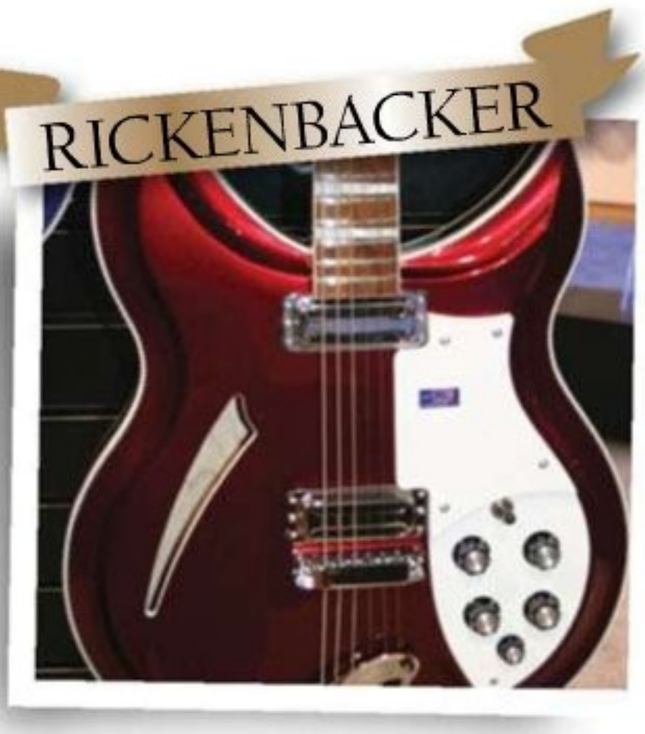
Limited Deans

DEAN showcased a truckload of new models at NAMM this year including three new Dave Mustaine signatures, four new Dimebag models (including the limited 'Concrete Sledge' ML, based on his original) and a smooth-looking Vinnie Moore 'Vinman Koa' signature... but taking pride of place were the three 35th Anniversary models (left). These pay tribute to the originals introduced at NAMM in 1977. The 35th Anniversary ML, V and Z have flame maple tops and mahogany bodies, thin necks modelled for high-speed playing, red side dot markers, vintage brass V plate hardware and two DiMarzio Super Distortion creme/creme humbuckers. You'll have to get in quick; they're limited to 150 each.

GJ2

Ex-Charvel/Jackson designer Grover Jackson made his name as the father of the modern shred guitar, so we were eager to check out his GJ2 models. The Korina Arete 5-Star is the pick of the bunch with all korina neck-through body construction, sculpted heel, rosewood fretboards with 'Infinity' inlays, Floyd Rose trem and a pair of 'Habanero' BW humbuckers. Other models in the Arete range include the standard all-basswood 5-Star in a variety of finishes and the 4-Star with an understated hand-rubbed oil finish. Keep your eye on these guys.

RICKENBACKER



While scoring the perfect tone is surely at the top of the list, we guitarists care just as much about the way our instruments look and those amongst you who like the slender curves of a RICKENBACKER will surely find it hard to resist their new ruby finish introduced at NAMM this year. They featured a number of models with the new look but our favourites were the 660 and 360, which took to their new suit perfectly.

FRAMUS

Framus Lorento

When we clapped eyes on the FRAMUS Vintage Billy Lorento semi-hollowbody with its stylish chrome-plated metal pickguard, we instantly wanted one. It's a reissue of a guitar built in the '50s for the man who would later become famous as pickup guru Bill Lawrence. In laminated spruce and maple, it has chunky celluloid block inlays and single-coil pickups. This tempting number comes in black rose high polish, cherry sunburst or black high polish ($1,399).

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Famous Five

MARSHALL

Fifty Years Of Loud from **MARSHALL** this year, celebrating a momentous half-century of providing stacks for the stars with the release of five different 1W amps – one from every decade of the company's glorious history. Marshall's plan is to stagger-launch one new model every 11 weeks, and the first delivery – out now – is the JTM-1C 1x10" combo (pictured above and also available as the JTM1H head) paying tribute to its trailblazing JTM45 cousin from the swinging '60s. Following quickly behind this will be the JMP-1, taking its inspiration from the '70s, then the JCM-1 based on the legendary best-selling JCM800 from the '80s, after which comes the two channel DSL-1 with effects loop evoking the '90s JCM2000, and lastly the JVM-1, modelled on their noughties fare and stuffed with all the modern features. All the combos feature Celestion speakers and a handy drop-down power switch for bedroom riffing. For more hefty budgets, the historically-correct limited edition Bluesbreaker incorporates all the original specs, including cloth and handwired electronics and comes in an enviable 50th Anniversary package paired with a specially commissioned Gibson/Marshall 50th Anniversary Les Paul. Marshall has even distilled a 50th Anniversary whisky; you just can't get more rock'n'roll than that...

HUGHES & KETTNER

HUGHES & KETTNER's new miniature 5W Tubemeister 5 head offers a level of valve tone and volume that belies its size. Weighing in at only 3.5kg this little beauty carries one 12AX7 preamp tube and a 12BH7 power amp tube to enable maximum strength and tone, a Drive switch and a simple three-band EQ for fine tuning. The unit maintains H&K's classy electric blue-lit Plexiglas and polished chrome frontage, too.

ENGL

ENGL embraces the past this year with the introduction of their new E765 Retro Tube 100 head (£1483.74) and E412RG 4x12" cab (£1038.17). Offering two malleable channels and powered by four ECC83/12AX7 preamp valves and four EL34 power valves, this retro affair should cover most vintage sounds with aplomb. Other features include three interchangeable front frames in shadow black, rocking red or vintage vanilla (available for cabs at £54.89 extra).

DV MARK

DV MARK releases two new models, the DV403CPC, a three-channel version of its popular 40W DV40 head, and an updated Triple 6 for brethren of heavy rock and metal. The new channel on the DV403CPC is set aside for high gain crunch, and the amp features CPC (Continuous Power Control) technology that allows players to change the amp's power incrementally from 40W down to just 1W. The new Triple 6 has three channels and nifty hi-gain switches to toggle between their Bad Boy and Triple 6 gain level.

IBANEZ

IBANEZ offered up a pair of new combos, each installed with their infamous Tubescreamer circuit. The TSA30 Tubescreamer 30W (above left) operates on a combination of three 12AX7 tubes and a pair of 6L6GC tubes via one 12" Celestion Seventy 80. It also boasts a Boost switch amongst the normal controls, and an effects loop. The TSA5 Tubescreamer 5W (right) is a simplified version with two tubes – one 12AX7 and one 6V6GT – and a 10" Celestion Tube 10. Both amps feature a Tubescreamer switch that sets the overdrive into action with Overdrive, Tone and Level controls for those all-important fine adjustments.

FENDER

Super Sonic

The new FENDER 15W Super Champ X2 combo (£406.80) and X2 head (shown top right; £346.80, plus £202.80 for the SC112 cabinet) are fired by two 6V6 tubes, have two switchable channels and a voicing knob to dial in 16 amp types from Tweed to Metal. You also get 15 effects, tap tempo, and a USB output – so Fender's FUSE software can be added for further tweaking. Pictured middle and bottom are the 13W Excelsior with 'E' grille (£298.80) and the Pawn Shop Special 2W Greta with VU meter (£202.80) – stylish all-valve units that should prove a whole lot of fun. Finally, the Machete (£2,014.80) is a top-spec dual-channel amp which features a digital reverb, XLR output with switchable speaker muting and cabinet emulation, and push/pull pots for gain or bright boost. It's dapper, too, with grey 'steering wheel grip accents' and a black and silver grille.

CARR

CARR unveils the Bloke – a dedicated overdrive amp built to replicate that classic vintage Brit sound, as well as taking inspiration from '60s US bass amp sounds. Featuring a volume (drive) control, two switchable master volumes plus a Lead mode, low/high gain switch and a three-band EQ with bass end routed through its own circuit, this is one mean-sounding amplifier.

CARVIN

Steve Vai took time out to launch his 100W all-tube Legacy 3 VL300 over at the CARVIN booth. Vai's spec includes four EL34 output valves, 12AX7 preamp valves, a third high-gain channel added from the Legacy 2, two effects loops, channel-assignable reverb and a MIDI-switching facility, making it a truly adaptable prospect. It's also got a cool internal LED feature that lets you assign colours to your channels.

AMPEG

AMPEG enters the six-string world once again with the re-release of a legendary valve combo. The handwired R-12R Reverberocket (£4,495) joins the Heritage Series with the same tasty tube-driven reverb and balanced tremolo that caused such a stir when it was first issued in the early '60s. Features include high-grade 6SL7/6SN7 octal preamp valves, 6L6 power valves, and a Celestion Alnico Gold speaker ensuring that rosy vintage clarity. Suited in Black Diamond Tolex and with a chrome-plated chassis, this retro gem is ripe for the picking. There'll only be 100 worldwide, though.

HAYDEN

HAYDEN branched out with the launch of Hayden Bespoke this year, allowing fans to take matters into their own hands. Guitarists can hot-rod their sound with a choice of tubes, power, speaker, gain structure, tone stack and more, and then move on to the ever-important looks, choosing everything from the case colour to the grille cloth.

EGNATER

For their new HG series, EGNATER has listened to customer feedback and upgraded its Rebel, Renegade and Tourmaster amps with more gain on the overdrive channels – and dressed them in a neat new black attire. For metalheads, Egnater has introduced the high-gain two-channel 120W Vengeance and its meaner brother, the Armageddon, with footswitchable midrange EQ control (cut/boost), as well as a canny built-in gate pedal, the ISP Decimator.

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Blue Meanie

VOX

Hotting up proceedings over at the **VOX** camp were three new units, all continuing their partnership with well-respected boutique amp builder Tony Bruno. The all-tube 4W AC4C1-BL Custom Series mini combo (£299) delivers all-round sounds from weighty crunch to classic AC30 Top Boost thanks to a pair of 12AX7 preamp tubes, a single EL84 and a 10" Celestion VX10 speaker. Sporting a dapper '1963 Blue' vinyl exterior paired with Tygon cloth and 'old-school' Bakelite handle, it'll take you back to the good ol' days of rock'n'roll. If you like the look but crave something just a little weightier, Vox has also given the AC15 and AC30 the historic treatment with the limited edition Custom Series AC15CL (£599) and AC30C2-BL (£923).

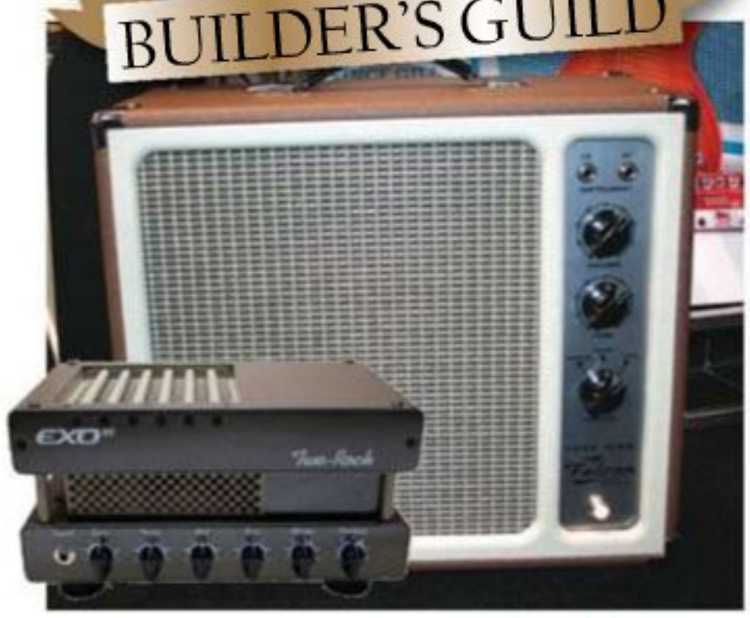
Also new at Vox was the TB18C1, powered by a pair of 6V6 output valves plus three 12AX7s and balanced for pure highs, smooth mids, sizeable

bass and warm overdrive. Other specs include series effects loop with true bypass and a G12-65 speaker (£600). The Handwired Series also gained a member in the AC4HW1 tube combo. It features an attractive spilt-baffle cab with fawn vinyl, one EL84, two 12AX7 preamp tubes and a Celestion G12M Greenback speaker (£718.80).

YAMAHA

YAMAHA's nifty lightweight THR5 and THR10 modelling amps look good. They're a one-stop shop for guitarists, with Virtual Circuitry Modelling supplying real tube amp tone from five amp models as well as offering eight classic effects. Other features include a chromatic tuner, hi-fi quality stereo output for playing to backing tracks, and Steinberg Cubase AI software. This all-in-one noisebox even has sexy virtual tube illumination.

BUILDER'S GUILD



Two top products under the PREMIER BUILDERS GUILD banner this year. Two Rock's compact single channel all-tube EXO-15 is a fine-looking amp with hefty onboard gain that's truly sensitive to your playing technique (£999). Tone King's new one-channel Falcon (£1,199) measured up too with built-in Ironman attenuator, three-way voicing control and 10" Eminence Ragin Cajun speaker – perfect for a broken-in tone somewhere between grit and clean.

ORANGE

A timely flagship reissue, an all-new 15W Class A amp, modish metal and micro magic from ORANGE this time round. First, the one-channel OR50 reissue featuring three gain stages, an attenuator for pure gain without volume and a canny HF Drive control to boost (or lower) the top end and then some. Next comes its kid brother, the new OR15H with single channel, four gain stages and a two EL84 valves. Want more punch? Feast your eyes on the Signature #4 Jim Root Terror Head, an all-tube 15/7W valve head with 12AT7 tube-driven effects loop and three band EQ (signature PPC212 cab also available). Lastly, the scaled-down, not-so-cute Micro Terror (and PPC108 cab) is powered by a single 12AX7 preamp tube and has an aux input for your MP3/CD player: small dimensions, big sound.

BUDDA

BUDDA entered the lunchbox amp arena with the new lightweight 18W Baby Budda (around £900), which garners the power of two 12AX7 preamp tubes and a point-to-point hand-wired EL84 power amp with a 5U4 rectifier for that real valvey grunt. It has normal/high-gain inputs, an FX loop and a simple, intuitive EQ. Lastly, a Slave Output gives you a direct output for recording or the option (if you dare) for even more live volume.

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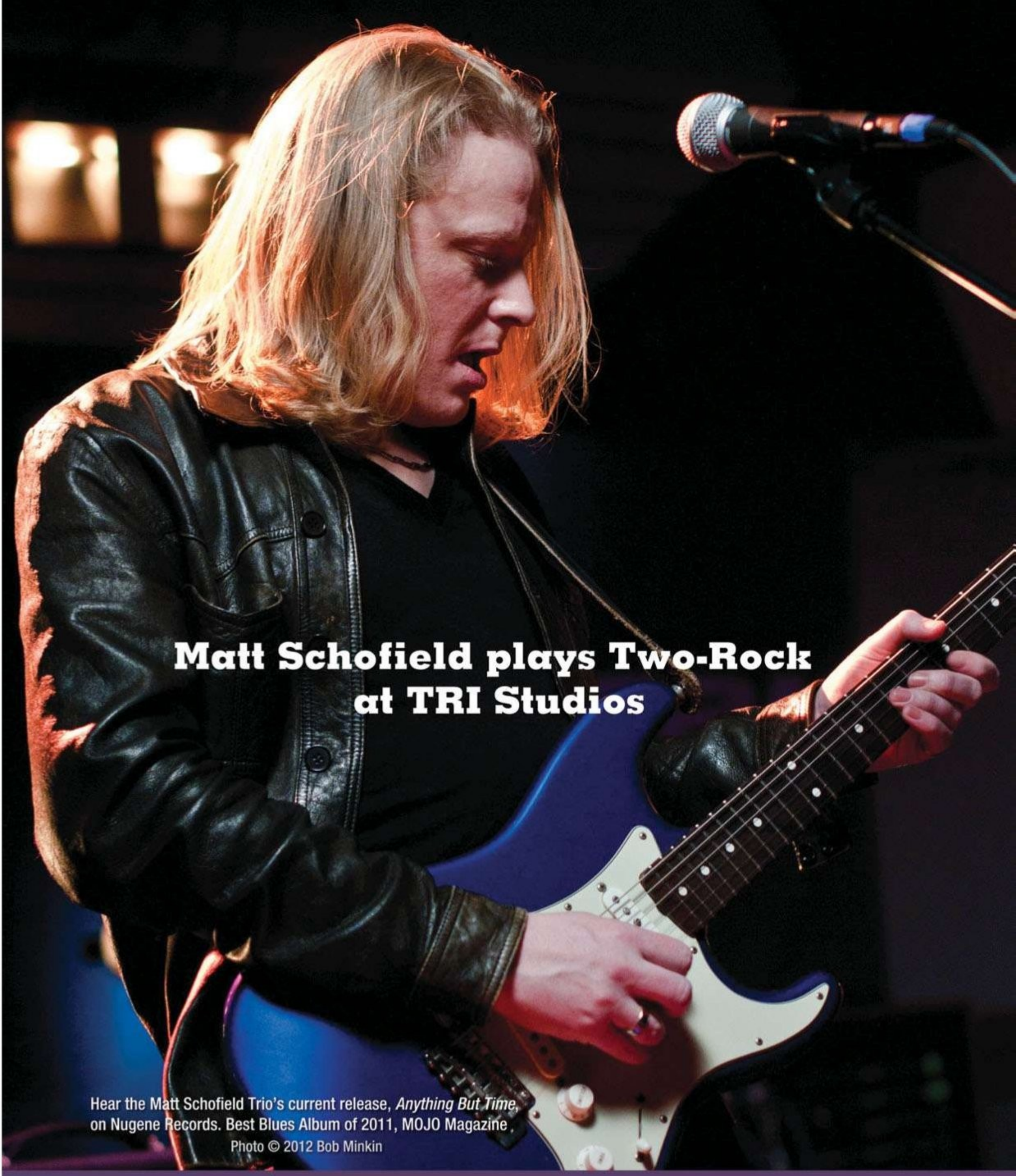

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FENDER

Fit For A King

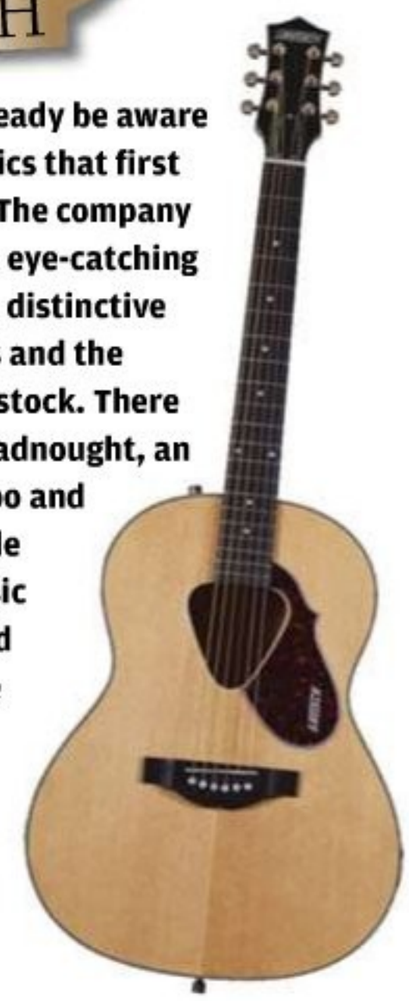
Fender honours the king of rock'n'roll with the Elvis Kingman acoustic guitar, a replica of the model he used with all his famous curled-lip, hip-swinging presence in the '67 cinematic romp *Clambake*. The Elvis Kingman dreadnought also recreates Fender's famous mid-'60s 'Wildwood' finish, in which living beech trees that provided the backs and sides were dyed in several elegantly striking colours before being harvested. Features include a solid spruce top, laminated Wildwood-style back and sides, maple neck, block inlaid 20-fret rosewood fingerboard and a Fender 'Viking' rosewood bridge. Price: £418.80.

Limited to 150 instruments, the all-new Fender USA Select Kingman C dreadnought is distinguished by a Custom Shop fiesta red gloss finish, aged white body binding, and vintage-style appointments. Premium features include a solid Engelmann spruce top and solid mahogany back and sides, a C-shaped maple neck with rolled edges and a Strat headstock shape; the preamp is the Fishman Matrix Infinity.

Fender's California Series of electro-acoustics has two new models. The Sonoran SCE Thinline has a sleek three-inch deep mahogany dreadnought body and solid spruce top, C-profile Strat neck, 20 fret rosewood fingerboard, bone nut and a three-ply gold pickguard. The electronics are Fishman's Isys pickup system.

First introduced in '68, the Fender Redondo CE dreadnought cutaway (£274.80) returns echoing the original model, now with a spruce top, mahogany back and sides, Strat headstock shape, three-ply gold pickguard, 20-fret rosewood fingerboard, and Fishman Isys pickup system.

GRETSCH



GRETSCH fans will already be aware of the Rancher acoustics that first appeared in the '50s. The company has re-launched these eye-catching models complete with distinctive triangular soundholes and the familiar Gretsch headstock. There are five models: a dreadnought, an orchestra, a Jr, a jumbo and a folk. Features include spruce tops, neo-classic thumbnail fingerboard inlays and 1940s style pickguards with Gretsch logo, while Fishman provide the electronics. Prices: £250.80-£404.80.

VINTAGE

The VINTAGE Paul Brett signature acoustic guitars had their official launch at this year's show. Brett has styled these models on parlours from the 1930s. The 12-string (pictured left, £499) has a 12th fret neck join, while the six-string (£449) is a 14-fret. Both have solid spruce tops, rosewood back/sides, maple purfling and gold hardware, while a useful modern twist comes via Fishman's Acoustic Matrix VT preamp with MAT pickup.

CRAFTER

To commemorate 40 years in the industry, CRAFTER launched its Pegasus-themed anniversary acoustic guitars. Players have a choice of solid rosewood or mahogany for the Grand Auditorium satin or gloss-finished body styles, with solid cedar soundboards. A Pegasus inlay denotes the grand occasion on the 21-fret Indian rosewood fingerboard, while LR Baggs provide the electronics for the electro-acoustics with their Element pickup system. The PG-Rose Plus (pictured centre) costs £769.99, the PG-Mahog Plus £649.99. On the left, the all-mahogany 6 Series TE-6MH/BR (£369.99) has a see-thru satin finish to enhance the dark tonewood and is powered by the CRT-T-TV preamp and cable pickup. Finally, on the right, the single cutaway GAE-9/MP has solid maple back and sides and a solid Engelmann spruce top for a 'light wood' theme; it's also available as dread or grand auditorium.

IBANEZ

IBANEZ launched a total of 15 new acoustic guitars. On the right is the TCM50NT (£263), a new addition to the Talman Series of double-cutaway electros. With a mahogany body, figured ash top, angled AP2 pickup and AEQ200M EQ preamp, this guitar is designed give full acoustic tones with the comfort of an electric, with enough stage cred to appeal to rockers. There are also lots of additions to the Artwood line, including the Engelmann/mahogany AW3010 dread and a sweet-looking hog-topped grand concert, the AC2040-OPN.

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MARTIN

One For The Road

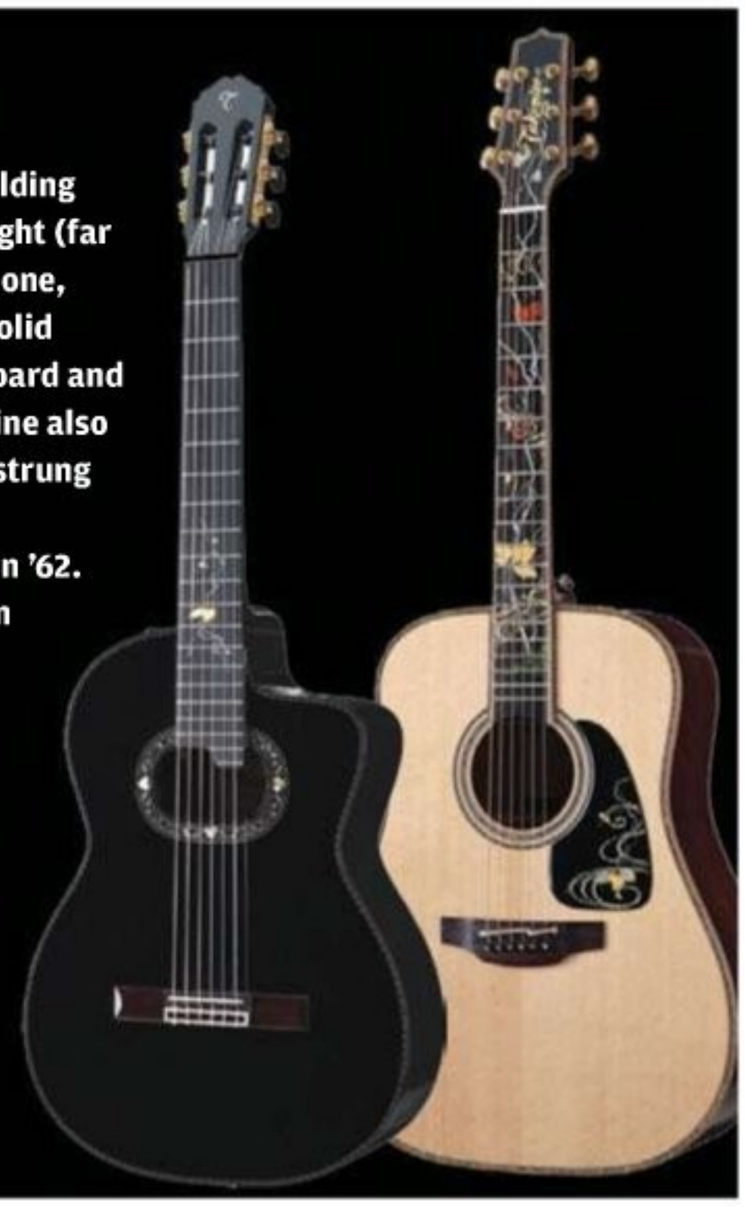
MARTIN is expanding its Road Series and Series 5 lines of electro-acoustics. The new DRS2 (£799, with case; pictured above centre) looks like a fine working guitar with solid sapele back and sides, a sitka top and extra-rigid Stratabond neck to handle the rigours of touring. A Fishman Sonitone sound reinforcement system completes the picture.

Flanking the DRS2 are two new Performing Artist guitars. On the left is the £1349 GPCPA4 Siris, introducing a new timber for Martin – lighter-coloured than rosewood, but denser in structure. There's a matching dread, the DCPA4 Siris. On the right is the £1349 GPCPA4 Sapele – and this one comes with a certified recycled sitka spruce top reclaimed from dismantled Canadian bridges. All these have fast, comfy Performing Artist profile necks, hybrid x-scalloped top bracing, Richlite fingerboards and bridges and Fishman F1 Analog electronics.

On the left is Martin's big artist debut for 2012, the 00-45SC John Mayer Stagecoach Edition. With an Adirondack top, cocobolo back and sides, hot hide glue construction and a $14.000 price tag, it's for the few – but the 12-fret 00 is one of Martin's most delicious designs, and to see an artist going all-out with Style 45 trimmings bodes well for the world economy.

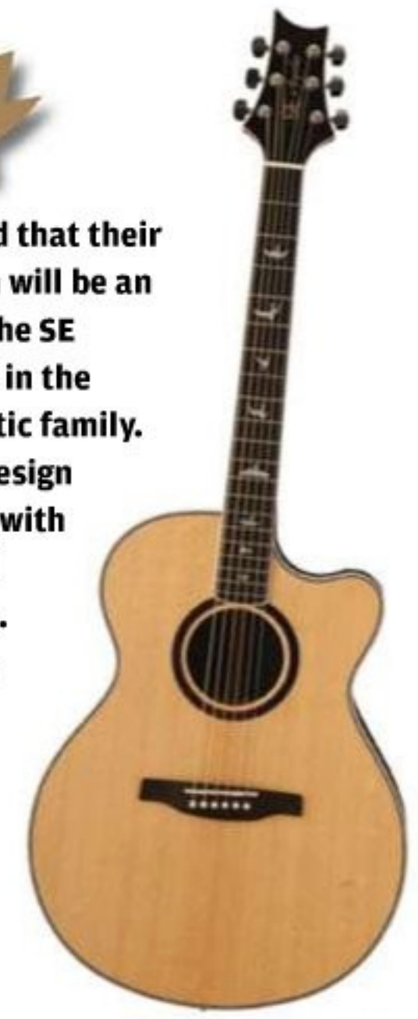
TAKAMINE

To commemorate half a century of guitar building **TAKAMINE** proudly aired its T50th dreadnought (far right). No efforts have been spared with this one, from the solid cocobolo back and sides to a solid AAAA sitka top, gold rosette, plus vine fretboard and body inlays. Price? Well... it's £5,542. Takamine also enters new territory with its LTD2012 nylon-strung electro-acoustic (near right), reflecting the company's origin as a classical builder back in '62. With a high-grade spruce top and solid Indian rosewood back and sides, the soft cutaway body has a black finish to match the ebony fingerboard, while Takamine's Cool Tube preamp takes care of the electronics. From the same 2012 Limited Edition Series the steel-strung LTD2012 single-cutaway dreadnought features equal appointments, and again, a Cooltube amplifies the chime. Each one costs £2,518. Finally, the G Series has seven new additions to the electro-acoustic range, priced from £274.



PRS

PRS has announced that their own pickup system will be an optional extra on the SE Angelus, the latest in the imported SE acoustic family. The undersaddle design includes a preamp with three-band EQ and anti-feedback loop. Available from the summer on the SE Angelus Std (pictured, £879) and SE Angelus Custom (£979).



TANGLEWOOD

TANGLEWOOD unveiled their new line of Sundance Natural models, featuring the company's Open Pore Technology and starting at £399. Tanglewood says that this minimal OPT finish creates a sophisticated warm tone. Auditorium and dreadnought styles make up the acoustics – the TW15 is shown left – while the super folk, super jumbo and dreadnought cutaway electro-acoustics have Fishman's Presys system. Solid cedar or spruce are the choice woods for the tops and black walnut or mahogany for the bodes, complete with maple binding, neck inlays and rosettes.

HOFNER

Germanic bluegrass: the new HCT-RG-SB from **HOFNER** blends the metallic resophonic sound of a Dobro-type spider resonator cone with the flash looks of a highly figured laminated maple body for a loud yet warm, fundamental tone. The 21-fret rosewood fingerboard features striped position markers akin to the company's famed '60s guitars. Electrics are provided by Hofner's own 'Staple' pickup in the neck position, with single volume and tone controls. Price: £599.

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Ready Set Koa

TAYLOR

Taylor had a wall of new and upgraded models. The Koa Series (below left) gets a re-vamp with exotic all-wood accoutrements, the centre piece of which is the elaborate Island Vine fretboard inlay of Hawaiian koa and maple with a plumeris flower design. The GS Mini (pictured right) is a scaled-down GS that's as portable as they come with a spruce or mahogany top, Taylor's NT neck joint and ES-GO pickup and Taylor's volume-control V-Cable. If you've ever fancied a nylon-strung acoustic but big, wide necks and castanets are not your thing, the 'Nylon' line (pictured far right) might swing it for you, with fast action, sleek necks, and quality appointments that include cutaway Grand Concert and Auditorium body styles plus a vast selection of tonewoods. The 200, 300, 400, 500, 600 and 700 Series models also get upgraded specs with new finishes, rosettes, bindings, and multiple soundboard choices.

BEDEL & BREEDLOVE

Left, this BEDEL LEOH in figured sapele is part of a one-per-week limited run for 2012 . Right, the Voice Series from BREEDLOVE is a collaboration with LR Baggs, with six models divided between Original Designs and Revival Designs, all featuring sitka spruce tops with bodies of myrtle wood, East Indian rosewood, walnut or Honduras mahogany, with tasty 'Voice' motif inlaid at the 12th fret.

LOWDEN

From May 2012 the 'Fan Fret' is the new addition to the range of custom options from **LOWDEN**, one of Ireland's finest guitar makers and surely the best-known. The fan fret system includes an angled nut and a bridge designed by George Lowden, and the whole idea is to increase the low frequencies by increasing lower-string tension while retaining playability on the trebles. It's an attention-grabber, for sure.

WASHBURN

Bend Me Shake Me

WASHBURN's new Forrest Lee Jr FLB26SCE signature model – a single-cutaway dreadnought electro-acoustic – caught our eye not just for its high quality construction and abalone inlays but also for its built-in B-bender system, which the country picking aficionado himself demonstrated rather superbly. The fully tension-adjustable B-Bender allows the player to achieve the kind of Clarence White sounds you'd never get from a standard flattop acoustic. The price: £786.

GUILD

Three new models conclude **GUILD**'s new Arcos Series of acoustics and electro-acoustic guitars. The AD-3 dreadnought (£598.80, pictured) features the company's arched-back body design, a satin-finished slim mahogany neck, medium jumbo frets, a solid sitka top, rosewood fingerboard and bridge, bone nut and saddle, koa rosette and Fishman electronics. The AD-3CE (£802.80) has a single cutaway and a Fishman Presys Plus system, while the AO-3CE cutaway orchestra model (£802.80) has the same system plus has a generous 1.75" nut, a hand-rubbed satin finish and a bolt-on neck.

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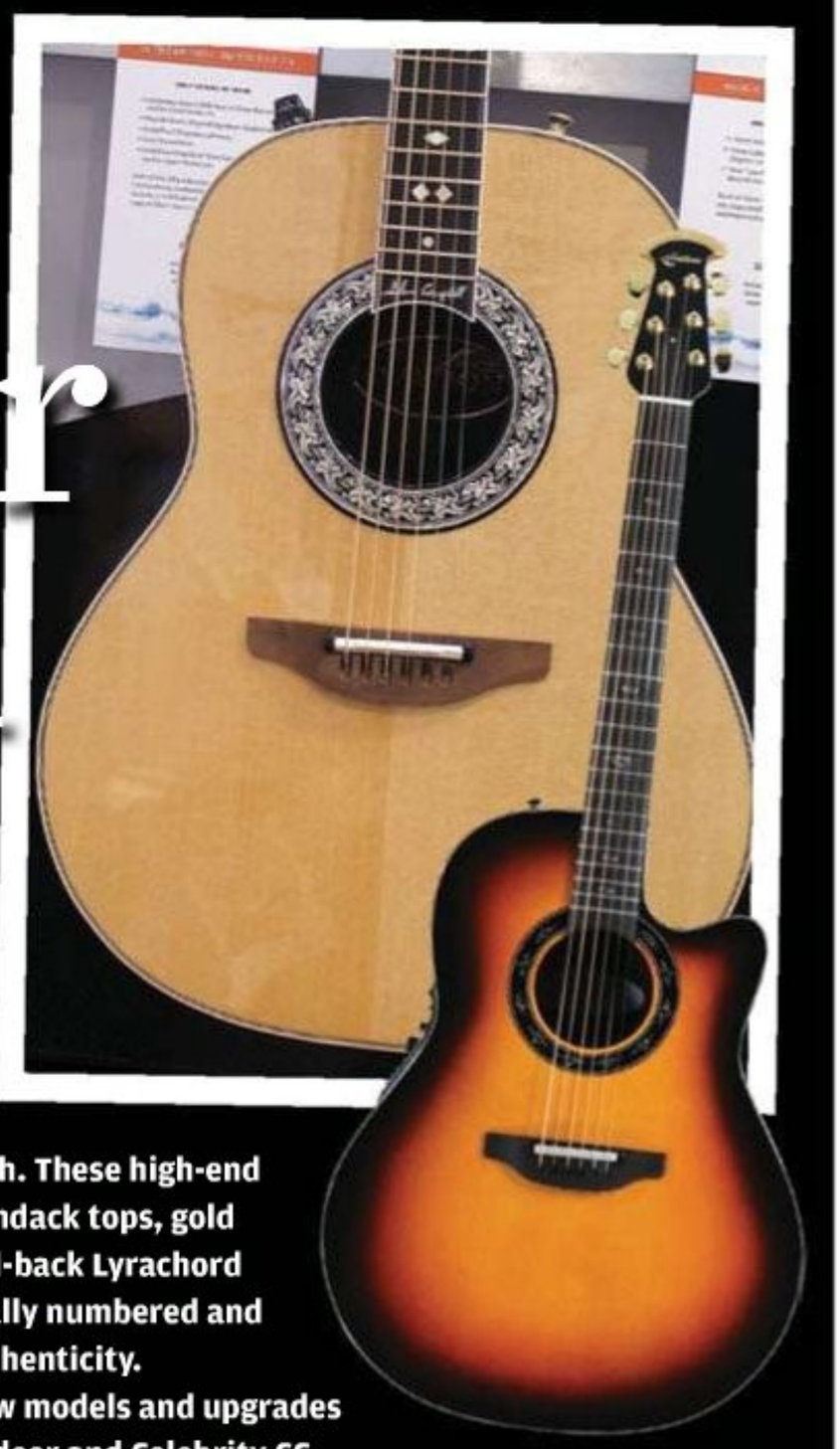
Super Bowl

OVATION



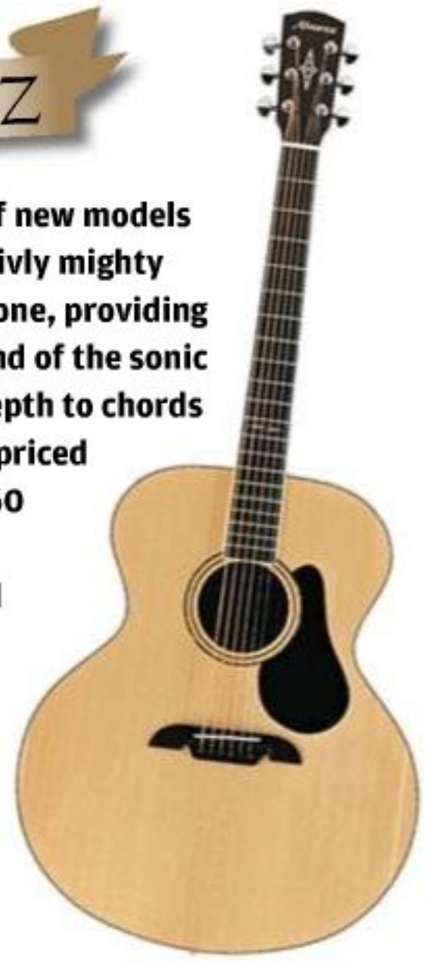
New from **OVATION** for 2012 is the Glen Campbell 1727 Ltd (top right) with a natural finish, built in a run of just 50 to celebrate the country music artist's half-century in the music business. The 1617ALE (right) is also a limited run of 50 with a delightful sunburst finish. These high-end electros feature handpicked Adirondack tops, gold hardware and a deep cutaway bowl-back Lyrachord body. Each guitar will be sequentially numbered and will arrive with a certificate of authenticity.

Ovation has also introduced new models and upgrades in the Elite, Standard Elite, Balladeer and Celebrity CC Series electro-acoustic guitars. These appointments include solid cedar and figured koa tops with an ultra-thin satin finish and an improved ergonomic contoured body shape. Prices start at £382.80.

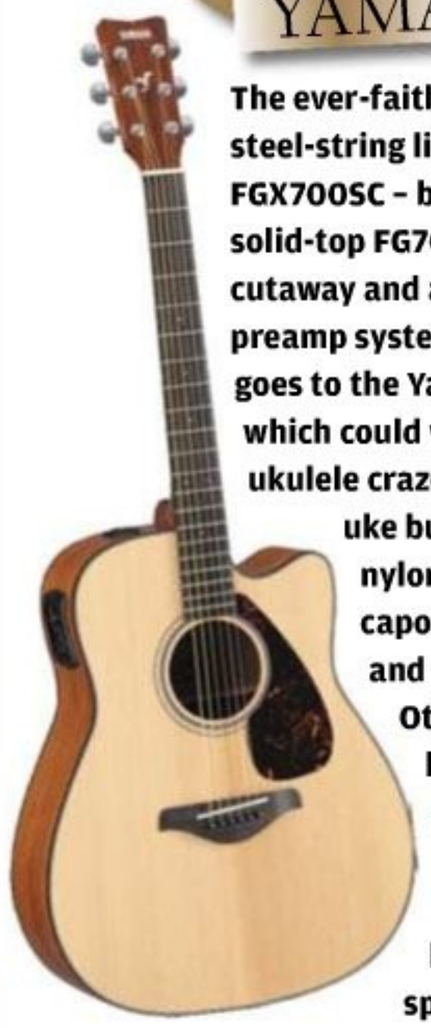
Both the steel-strung YM68 (pictured left) and the nylon-strung YM63 Yngwie Malmsteen signature Viper models feature a solid chambered mahogany body, a five-piece mahogany and maple neck, and preamp circuitry specially designed to deliver natural acoustic tone with absolutely no feedback – even when played at high-level stage volumes. In keeping with Yngwie's specs, the steel-string Viper also has a hand-scalloped fingerboard which creates less friction between the wood and the string when bending notes or adding vibrato. The Yngwies will be available in white and Rossa Corsa red.

ALVAREZ

ALVAREZ had a host of new models including the impressivly mighty ABT60 Acoustic Baritone, providing a lift in the weighty end of the sonic spectrum and huge depth to chords and lead runs. Nicely priced under £400, the ABT60 comes with a hand-selected A-grade solid sitka spruce top, mahogany back and sides, chrome hardware and the Alvarez bi-level rosewood bridge.



YAMAHA



The ever-faithful **YAMAHA** FG steel-string line is joined by the FGX700SC – basically the classic solid-top FG700S with added cutaway and a System 55T piezo/preamp system. A cutie prize goes to the Yamaha GL1 Guitalele, which could well cash in on the ukulele craze by looking like a uke but playing like a nylon-strung guitar capo'ed at the fifth fret and tuned from A to A. Other news: the handcrafted A Series electros will now come with handsome bearclaw-figure spruce tops.

SEAGULL

Canadian maker **SEAGULL** has access to some of the world's finest tonewoods in its back garden, witnessed here in the company's new Natural Elements Collection of electro-acoustic guitars (shown on the right). These individually unique pieces feature the Natural Elements burn-stamp in their silver-leaf soundboards. They are available in three sizes – mini-jumbo, folk and standard – and are named after the woods used to construct the three-ply bodies: Figured Amber Trail Maple, Heart Of Wild Cherry and Natural Cherry. All are fitted with butterbean open tuners and loaded with B-Band electronics. From the same camp, the Entourage Rustic Grand Parlour (pictured on the left) delivers good volume and sweet tone from a body of Canadian wild cherry.

PEAVEY

PEAVEY's Composer acoustics are parlour models with a cool modern design thanks to a teardrop-shaped soundhole off-set in the top bout of the laminated spruce top. A generous cutaway allows excellent high fret access on the 14 degree angled mahogany neck which, along with 24.75" scale, makes this an ideal travel guitar catering for all playing styles. Cosmetics include chrome hardware and bound fingerboard and body binding. Available in natural or sunburst satin finishes, they're £125 including a backpack-style gig bag.

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Floor Show

FENDER

Though not terrifically well-known for its effects pedals, **FENDER** has taken a leap of faith and produced its very first multi-FX unit, the Mustang Floor (£299). Essentially, Fender has taken all the best bits from the successful Mustang modelling amps and made them available with just a tap of the toe. The Mustang Floor has 12 amp models, 37 effects, 100 onboard user presets, plus 'individual stompbox mode' so amp models are bypassed and the unit becomes 'just' a pedalboard. XLR, quarter-inch and USB inputs mean it's perfect for recording, and it's also a live preamp with speaker-emulated outputs for running into a PA. With the included FUSE software you can download more presets and edit sounds almost indefinitely. A stunning debut.

BOSS

BOSS has always been at the forefront of multi-FX technology and the GT-100 (£469) should see them hold fast in 2012. A new ultra-fast processor means improved muscle for modelled amps and effects, which includes eight original new amp models. Intuitive navigation is improved with the help of dual displays, while the new ACCEL control lets you adjust multiple effects parameters as you go. The RC-300 Loop Station (£469) is being touted as the most powerful and versatile looper ever made. There are three stereo tracks, each with dedicated footswitches, controls and fader, an expression pedal to help manipulate the 16 onboard effects, and up to three hours of internal recording with 99 memories to fill. Take a few minutes to view Mr Rico Loop's demo on YouTube and you'll be reaching for your wallet.

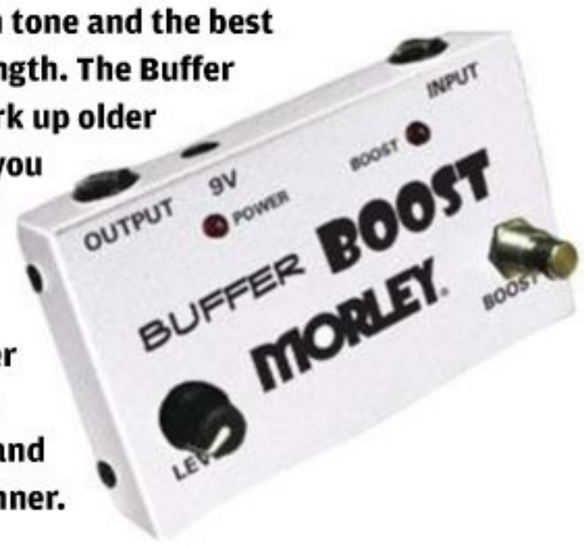
EGNATER

Upmarket US amp builder EGNATER is testing the water with its very first stompboxes. The Overdose is a dual clean boost and overdrive packed into one pedal, while the Holy Driver is a beast of an overdrive aimed at heavy rock/metal players complete with a footswitchable mid cut/boost section, as featured on Egnater's Armageddon amp. Expect two new delay pedals later in 2012. All priced around $170.

MXR

With the MXR Modified OD (£121) the company's design team reckon they've pushed the boundaries of overdrive. Key factors are a Bump switch, which adds a low and mid frequency output boost to punch forward in the mix, and a 100HZ filter control to tighten up the low end – all on top of the MXR classic crunch options.

MORLEY



MORLEY's buffer circuit has been honed over 15 years to maintain tone and the best possible signal strength. The Buffer Boost ($119) will perk up older pedals no end, and you can run cables from around the block with no signal loss. Pair it with a booster that gives you up to 20dB of extra bark and you've got a real winner.

PIGTRONIX

Dubbed the 'ultimate in distortion' by PIGTRONIX, the FAT Drive ($175) is named after the company's motto: Futuristic Analogue Tone. Multiple cascaded gain stages means it can cover slight breakup to total saturation. Also on show was the Infinity, a powerful stereo multi-track looper built 'in the spirit of Les Paul' and stuffed full of innovative features.

VOX

Fab Lab

Covering just about any type of delay you could conceive of, including all the old faves and innovative originals like Dual Delay and Distortion Delay, the VOX DelayLab (£230-ish) pushes every boundary. There are 30 delays to choose from, and each can be tailored to your needs and stored in one of 30 presets. Even then, the addition of an expression pedal lets you manipulate the sound further as you play. Delay time is adjustable in 1ms steps to a max of four seconds, and on top of all this you have a 28 second looper – all nicely packaged in a vintage-style box that belies its futuristic capabilities. Totally retro is the all-handwired Vox V846-HW Wah Wah (£203); with not a circuit board to be found and packing a vintage-spec Halo type inductor, we're assured you won't find a more authentic wah anywhere.

TC ELECTRONIC

Last year TC ELECTRONIC blew our minds with the TonePrint concept, which allows you to continually download new sounds into your pedal. Dream Theater's John Petrucci was onboard early, and now has a TonePrint 'Dreamscape' signature pedal (£250) with two chorus, two flanger and two vibrato sounds – ideal for his famed prog machinations.

TECH 21

TECH 21's Boost series (all £159) combine vintage tones with modern dependability and are so named because each unit can deliver up to 21dB of clean boost independently of the effect. The Boost Fuzz and Boost Distortion have a special Sag control that dials in extra articulation, while the Boost Overdrive pairs well with cleaner amps and has a sparkle control that adds snappy upper harmonics.

Z.VEX

In the Sonar Z.VEX has built a tremolo/machine-pulser that overcomes the inherent problems in using tremolo with hi-gain amps; 'freaky-licious' sound shaping options come as standard. Dinosaur Jr's J Mascis requested Z.Vex make him a pedal that had the tones of the Distortron, Super Hard-On and Box of Rock all in one ultra-versatile package. The Double Rock does all this and more.

IBANEZ

IBANEZ simply had to celebrate 30 years of the Tubescreamer and this sparkly green TS9 30th Limited Edition (£189) has a high-intensity green LEDs to stand in for birthday cake candles. If you require heavier distortion but with a similar flavour, the reissued SD9M Sonic Distortion Mod (£79) is the original Tubescreamer's noisy sibling – and in Gain Boost mode it's a proper monster.

CATALINBREAD

An octave-up fuzz in the tradition of the Octavia, CATALINBREAD's Octopussy can handle everything from delicate harmonies to fuzzed-up ripping power chords and everything in between. Also on show was the Nautilux Chorus Vibrato, inspired by the Boss CE-1.

RED WITCH

The RED WITCH Synthotron ($399) analogue synth pedal is frankly madder than a bag of spanners. It's packed full of whacky and addictive *Dr Who*-style weirdness – 'a psychotropic love-in for your axe' as these clearly deranged Kiwis put it. Two synth controls allow you to shift up and down two octaves or both simultaneously if you wish. Tremolo and Envelope Filter can be mixed in, and then Sample Hold flicks on a barrage of looped mayhem. Wild!

EHX

In an increasingly digital world ELECTRO-HARMONIX has found a way to warm up those processed tones and it goes under the name of the Analogizer (£85). It's specifically meant to add organic analogue nuances to a digital delay pedal but does more besides and can also be used as a standalone overdrive. Founder Mike Matthews has warned us to expect another new pedal soon, the Super Ego.

DIGITECH

Future Stomp

Get yourself one of these babies and you may never need to buy another 'physical' pedal again. **DIGITECH** has launched the iStomp, a pedal that in conjunction with your iTouch, iPad or iPhone can be turned into just about any style of pedal you can think of. You still have to buy the unit itself (£159) but from that moment the Digitech Stomp Shop app, which can be downloaded gratis, will allow you instant access to its wares, even allowing you to try out each pedal for a full five minutes before you pay up (from £3 to £6). The pedal comes with the Total Recall Delay and Redline overdrive to get you started. All your pedals are stored in your Apple device, and you can set an LED colour for each pedal to help remind you which one is loaded. There 20 pedals to choose from already, and the number will just keep on rising.

WAY HUGE

The WAY HUGE Red Llama Mk II overdrive (£133) is a reissue of the first pedal the company ever made 20 years ago. A straight replica of the original – complete with its legendary bombastic capabilities – it can leap from small tweed amp-style tone right up to delicious fuzzy overdrive.

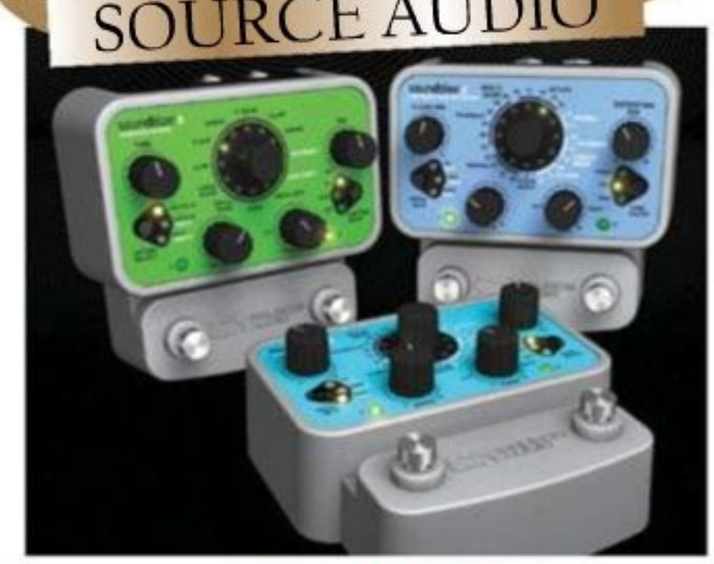
ZOOM

ZOOM's G3 has matured into the well-appointed G5 (£230) complete with four LCD displays that allow you to use nine stompbox and amp effects simultaneously. It's also grown an expression pedal which not only senses up/down but also side to side moves for 'a whole new realm of pedal performance'.

DV MARK

Italian company DV Mark believes you should be able to tailor your boost and distortion exactly as you wish (Freedom!). To that end, it has launched the DV7 Distorsore and DV7 Booster complete with 8-band EQs to make it possible. For those who require less tweakage there's also the harmonic-rich DV Fuzzer and a new diminutive range of three pedals – Mini Boost, Mini Drive and Mini Dist – with bespoke Italian tone in handy compact form.

SOURCE AUDIO



US innovators SOURCE AUDIO impressed with the launch of the Soundblox 2 range of compact pedals. First offerings are the Multiwave Distortion, available in both guitar and bass models, and the Dimension Reverb created by top stomp designer Bob Chidlaw with no less than 12 fine, tweakable reverbs.

DUNLOP

DUNLOP displayed Joe Bonamassa's grittily-voiced signature Crybaby Wah (£218), which features a vintage-style Halo inductor updated with a few shrewd modern tweaks. After six years in development we finally get to sample the Eric Johnson Fuzz Face (£242) with hand-selected BC183 silicon transistors for the 'pinnacle of psychedelic fuzz'. Finally, a Rotovibe (£266) has been on Zakk Wylde's board since 1988 and he now has a signature version of the rotating speaker effect. He warns that once switched on, you won't want to turn it off.

BLACKSTAR

UK success story BLACKSTAR continue to take on the world with the HT-Metal (£179), a no-compromise, two-channel, ultra high-gain valve distortion unit. The most extreme pedal yet from Blackstar offers every flavour of distortion you could wish for.

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Visual Mix

Line 6 moves into live sound with an intuitive system that wowed the whole of NAMM. The StageScape M20d caters for musicians who turn tail at the prospect of live sound. This touchscreen unit creates a virtual mixing experience that replaces the conventional channel strip, employing icons so users can see the band on-screen to get the perfect mix both onstage and out front; tweak parameters such as EQ, via a user-friendly display or delve deeper in 'Deep Edit' mode. It's all remote-controllable via one or more iPads, with built-in FX, EQ, compression and feedback suppression as well as multi-channel recording to perfect a mix post-soundcheck. You can pair the M20d with Line 6 StageSource L3t speakers, or upscale the whole operation for larger venues with more (there's a L3s subwoofer too).

TASCAM

TASCAM's DP-24 24-track digital Portastudio lets you lay down up to eight tracks and features multi-FX processors, amp simulations and mastering capabilities, all controlled via the LCD display. The new DR-40 PCM Recorder offers a more compact solution with four tracks, built-in condenser mics, dual recording/ overdub modes and a chromatic tuner as well.

ALESIS

The ALESIS AmpDock iPad interface was designed with guitars in mind. It comes with a chunky pedalboard controller and two handy knobs that can be assigned to control parameters within whichever app your using. The unit also has two inputs (1/4" jack/switchable XLR) with independent volume controls, USB MIDI for connecting to external controllers or MIDI (software/hardware) and supports GarageBand, JamUp, AmpliTube and most audio or CoreMIDI apps. There's a handy kickstand too, ideal for the top of your amp, or a mic stand mount if you prefer.

FISHMAN

FISHMAN's Triple Play Wireless Guitar Controller fits to your axe and sends a signal to the wireless USB receiver via the hexaphonic pickup to provide a library of virtual instruments to try out via your DAW or hardware synth. There are neat features like sustain, looping and arpeggiators, and you can split frets or strings. Trust us, it's quite odd playing drums with a pick...

ROTOSOUND

Two new clip-on tuners from ROTOSOUND. The AT350 (£16.95) tunes via a small mic and has various tuning modes (C, F, Bb, Eb, chromatic); it also helpfully glows in the dark. Meanwhile, the AMT Metronome tuner (£17.95) works for nailing pitch and tempo. Neat!

KORG

KORG's latest little black box is the PitchBlack Poly (£82.80), a stylish polyphonic tuner with true bypass. It features a 'String Seeker' feature; strum the strings and it reveals the tuning status of all your strings, TC Polytune-style, singling out which are out of tune. Turn the tuner of that string and it automatically shows up on the display. The double meter design with four display modes allows for maximum visibility.

ELIXIR

ELIXIR's Nanoweb strings are now available for four-stringers who take their sound seriously. A super-thin Nanoweb coating covering the entire string ensures the strings remain free of dirt, skin and oils to give bassists a long-life string and a tone that lasts longer.

Select Committee

FENDER

Among the many **FENDER** bass delights on offer were the new Select Series four-stringers. The Fender Selected Precision Bass and its Jazz sibling (both £2315) sport alluring sunburst finishes, C-shaped maple necks kept stable with Posiflex graphite support rods and compound radius fretboards (maple for the Precision, rosewood for the Jazz). They also have Premium Fender pickups, High-Mass vintage bridges, and all the bells'n'whistles you'd expect from a top-of-the-line production model.

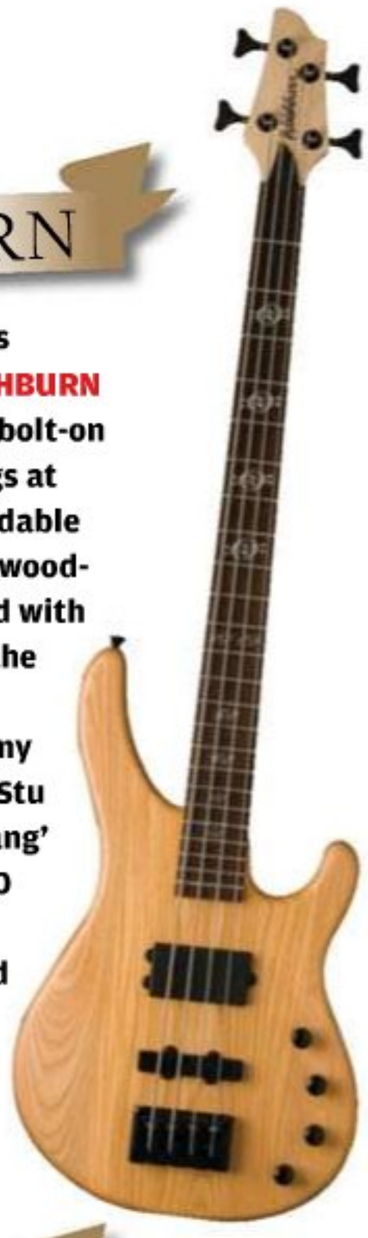
The world will have the opportunity to resonate with a new kind of classic low-end with the launch of Fender's new Bassman Pro Series of heads and cabs, all decked out in Fender 'mid-'60s' blackface styling. Undoubtedly the, erm, bassiest of the Bassmans is the appropriately-named Super Bassman Pro (£2219). Powered by a valve preamp fuelled by two 12AX7s and a valve power amp fitted with six 6550s, this whopping 300W head has a vintage Fender channel for old-school tones and an overdrive channel for more modern sounds. We rather like the Automatic Bias system that re-biases the tubes for maximum performance and cleverly lets you know when something needs your attention, and there's a mute option too that allows you to record silently from the XLR output.

The Super Bassman Pro's little brother the Bassman 100T (£1919) has the same preamp but is powered by four 6L6s and has a nifty adjustable power switch that allows you to go between 100W and 2W. On top of that, a 25W 'silent' mode allows the internal power soak to take the strain.

If you're looking for an accompanying cab, there are four to choose from; the 2000W-rated Bassman 810 Neo (£1607), the 1600W-rated 610 Neo (£1415), the 100W-rated 410 Neo (£803) and the 700W-rated 115 Neo (£707). All these lightweight, back-friendly cabs have removable castors and spring-loaded handles.

WASHBURN

In collaboration with bass maestro Stu Hamm, WASHBURN unveiled some tasty new bolt-on maple-necked four-strings at NAMM. At the more-affordable end of the scale, the basswood-bodied SHB30 is equipped with passive pickups. Next in the line is the SHB40 ($713) which features a mahogany body, active pickups and Stu Hamm's signature 'yin-yang' bass clef inlay. The SHB60 boasts an alder body as well as active pickups and piezos. RRPs are £225, £269 and £399 inc vat for the 30, 40 and 60 respectively



MARKBASS

Despite its weeny size, the MARKBASS Big Bang really caught our eye. This solid state preamp is crammed full of useful features including VLE and VPF filters with footswitch control, aux in, headphone out with Level control, Mute – and it weighs less than 5lbs! There was also a TTE amp head update, the TTE 800, giving the same tonal versatility but increased wattage. Four bass pedals were also unveiled: the MB7 EQ/Booster, the MB Mini Boost, the MB Mini Dist and our fave, the MB Distorsore, with a seven-band EQ that allows you to realise the mayhem of your dreams.

YAMAHA

The latest addition to the YAMAHA RBX series is the RBX170EW (£228). Promising to be a one-stop four-string for all your practice, live and home recording needs, the bolt-on RBX170EW features an exotic mango top and vintage-style bridge as well as a one split-coil/one single-coil pickup up configuration for tonal versatility. Finish fans can choose between tobacco sunburst, natural and root beer (pictured).

SQUIER

A Fine Romance

We're guessing that My Chemical Romance's Mikey Way will be hugging himself to sleep for many years to come as a result of his new SQUIER signature model (£311). Designed with input from the man himself, this Mustang bass is pimped out in large flake silver sparkle complete with black racing stripes and one single mind-melding humbucker.

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ASHDOWN

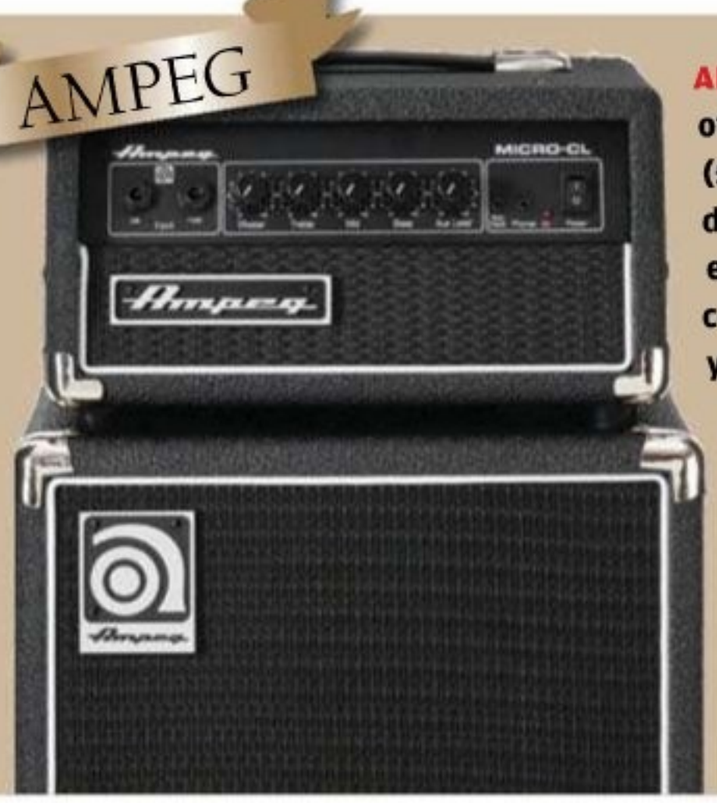
Festive Fifteen

ASHDOWN decided to celebrate the year it turns 15 with a flurry of activity and a lorryload of panache. The announcement of a new Ashdown Custom Shop went down well, particularly when people saw things like a seafoam green Drophead or cabs in red tolex complete with diamond padded covers. There were upgrades to the All Access range of practice amps and quality new and improved additions to the ABM, Electric Blue and MAG ranges (heck, even the Little Bastard gets an upgrade). The newly-launched Classic Tube Magnifier head had plenty of admirers, drawn to its ease of use, stylish looks and tonal warmth.

PEAVEY

PEAVEY launched its all-new Max series of bass combos. The Max 115, Max 113 and Max 110 include some intriguing psycho-acoustic low-end enhancement that promises extra bass without putting your speaker through the mill. You also get a chromatic tuner with mute, while the Max 115 comes with a built-in tweeter that is bypassed when the TransTube gain boost is engaged, allowing a classic overdrive sound. The Max 158 and Max 126 practice amps also boast the TransTube gain boost, as well as some handy DDT compression.

AMPEG



AMPEG announced a new addition to its range of micro-sized SVTs. The Micro-CL Stack (£374) might look as cute as a button and it definitely wears the classic Ampeg vibe with ease, but this 100W solid state head and companion 2x10" bass enclosure can rock your rehearsal room, your recording set-up, and generally give your neighbours a helluva fright. Features include a dedicated FX loop, an unbalanced direct out and an 1/8" input and output, allowing you to jam along to a track or rehearse silently with headphones. Ampeg also announced a new limited edition run of the popular Heritage B-15 –get 'em quick!

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IBANEZ

Over at **IBANEZ** the NAMM party was in full swing on a multitude of fronts. However, that didn't stop us from eyeing up some bass delights. First there was the SR1206 six-string (far right): released to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the SR bass, the SR1206 has a mahogany body with ovangkol top, a five-piece Atlas-6 wenge/bubinga neck with titanium reinforcements, Nordstrand Big Single pickups and an EQB-IIISC 3-band EQ. Among the new signature models was a rather striking model for Arch Enemy's Sharlee D'Angelo (above). The Iceman-inspired SDB2 is fitted with PFR pickups and decked out with iron cross inlays. The Ibanez PGB2T Paul Gray is a worthy tribute to the late Slipknot bassist, fitted with a powerful single bridge pickup and decked out in a wonderful graphic finish. Finally, for acoustic bass fans, Ibanez launched the AEGB20E (left). This rather nifty small-bodied electro-acoustic number comes with a flame maple top, mahogany back and sides and an Ibanez SPT preamp. Expect it to cost around the £300 mark.

ESP

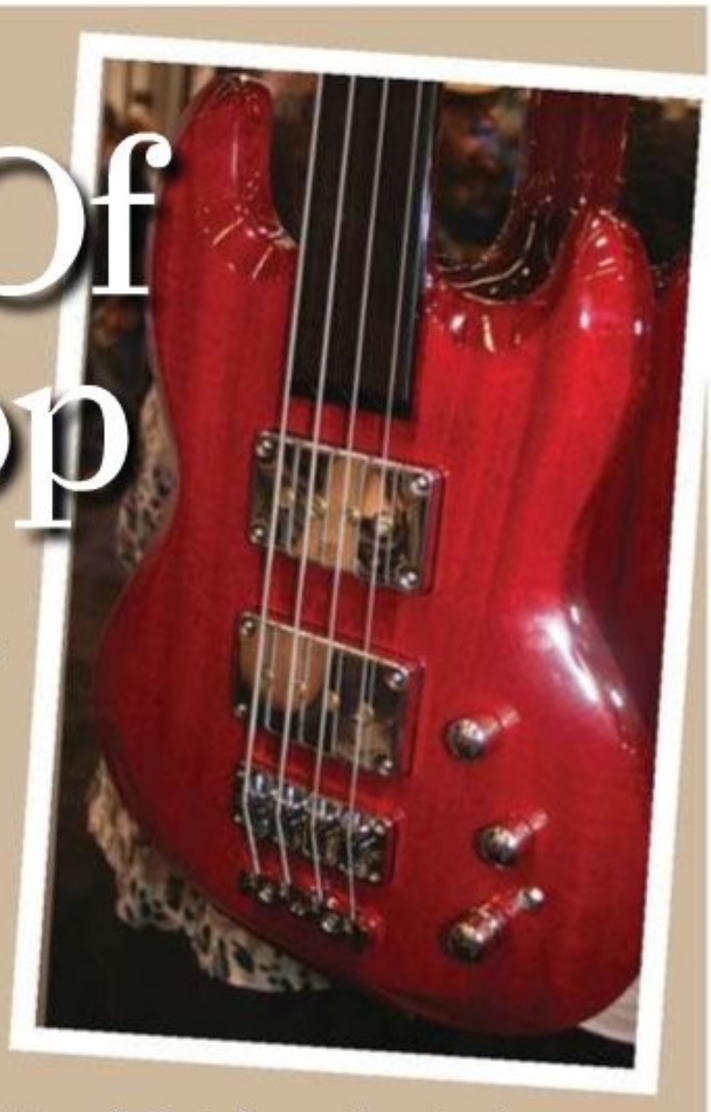
ESP unleashed its new Frank Bello model (pictured, $2856) on the NAMM hordes, as well as an LTD FB-4 ($1355). These basses for the Anthrax man are based on the ESP Vintage-4 and come complete with a black stain finish, a 34" scale and 21 jumbo frets. If that just seems a bit too conservative for your tastes, then we suggest the LTD DK-5 ($1428), a spiky active five-string designed by Suicide Silence's Dan Kenny.

DUESENBERG

DUESENBERG displayed all their usual hallmarks of class. Nothing was more charming than the D-Bass Fretless (shown on the right, €1799), except for maybe the Eagles 40th Anniversary Bass (€3250), complete with an all-over golden finish and cool three-dimensional wings on the lower half of the body.

Cream Of The Crop

WARWICK



The WARWICK stand was a bass player's paradise; those who had a go on the Alien six-string acoustic bass will have had their lives changed forever, and that was just for starters. However, even among such low-end treasure the Jack Bruce Survivor Bass (€6,689) won many a heart. This neck-through four-string with mahogany body and neck has a tigerstripe ebony fingerboard (in both fretted and fretless versions) with a two-octave range and side dot LEDs for guidance in the dark. MEC Vintage single-coils and active MEC 2-band electronics make for a fine mixture of modern and vintage. It's available in burgundy red and nirvana black. Jazzer Jimmy Earl's five-string signature (€6,929) also caught the eye; it has a US swamp ash body and a bolt-on maple neck and is fitted with Active EMG J/J pickups and the same two-band Blackbox electronics that featured on Earl's 1986 bass.

FRAMUS

The new Vintage 5/150 Star Bass Bill Wyman model from FRAMUS – a 30" scale instrument featuring vintage pickups, machineheads and all the necessary retro styling – will have you reliving those early Rolling Stones days in a jiffy.

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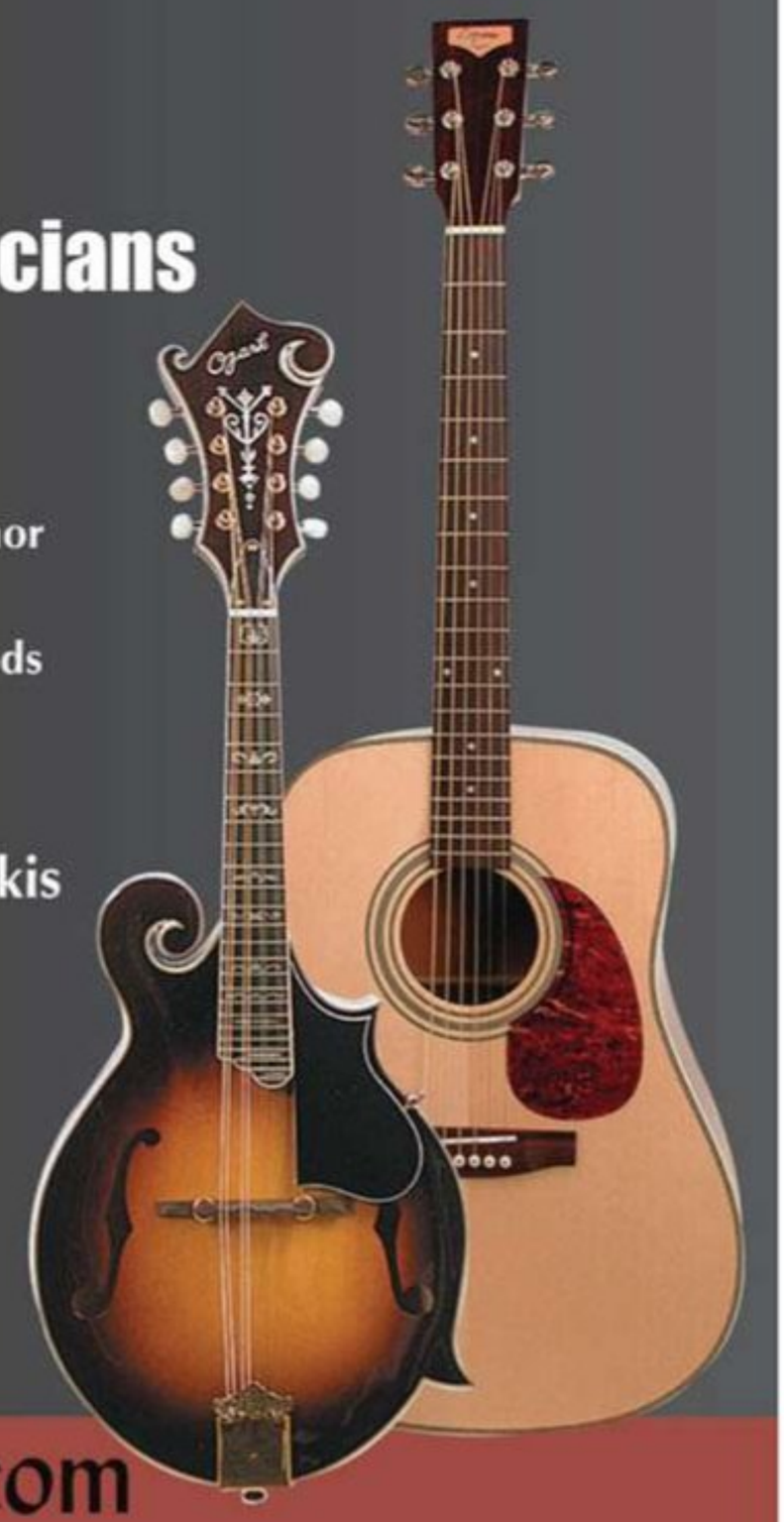

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Disarmed And Ready

To have been in one legendary rock band is very fortunate. To have been in two is, well, almost a miracle. To have been in three is to be Michael Schenker. Interview by **Matt Lamy**

Via the Scorpions, UFO and MSG, Michael Schenker has sealed a place as one of the great hard rock axemen... but then he did start very young. 'Music was always part of me for as long as I can remember, since I was three, four, five years old,' Schenker says. 'When my brother got a guitar instead of a motorcycle – I was nine, and he was 16 – that was the real beginning for me. And ever since I was 11, lead guitar has always been the fascinating part for me in any piece of music. I never listened to anything unless it had great lead guitar.'

Together with his brother Rudolph, Michael formed the Scorpions – a group that would become the biggest German rock band of all time. But for a teenage guitarist with big dreams, playing clubs in early 1970s Germany just didn't cut it.

'The Flying V sounded a little bit hollow. It was like a big sound with a hole in it'

'Being in a rock band was great – period. But in Germany everything was so slow. I was falling asleep. I knew what I wanted and absolutely knew what I enjoyed, but in Germany there was no management around and nothing was organised. In England, music was a proper job. There wasn't any interest in Germany – people were just getting into disco and stuff like that.

'When I was 15 or 16 years old I was listening to Johnny Winter, Rory Gallagher, Jimmy Page, Eric Clapton, Leslie West – anybody who played guitar and could do something that I wasn't able to at that time. I was getting ready to break out. I always told the Scorpions that if anybody from England approached me to join their band, I would do it immediately. It wouldn't matter whether it was a big band or not, it was just the fact that they were from England, as that's where I wanted to be. So when UFO asked me to join them, that was perfect.'

As well as beginning to make his name as a stunning lead guitar player, Schenker had also started a lifelong relationship with one particular design of instrument.

'My brother bought himself a Flying V when I was about 15. Now, my brother has a story about this that I don't remember, and I have a story that he doesn't remember!' Michael laughs. 'The one I remember is that I broke a string on stage just before a lead break, and my brother saw it and he passed over his guitar. I thought: hmm, this sounds good, a V with a 50W Marshall. I told him I thought it was a really nice combination for me, and he said I could have it.

'That particular guitar and that particular amplifier somehow just sounded magical. At that time I had been playing a Les Paul, and the Les Paul was pretty fat-sounding, but the Flying V was a little bit hollow. The V with the Marshall had a kind of *oohm* noise – like a big sound with a hole in it.'

In late 1973, at the age of just 18, with his Flying V round his neck and his goal to join a British band achieved, Schenker set to work writing his first album with UFO – the classic rock powerhouse *Phenomenon*.

'I always write at home, and I just play guitar until I hear something that gives me goose pimples. On some other songs – like *Rock Bottom*, for instance – I played that riff while we were sitting together and Phil [Mogg, UFO's singer] jumped up and said: "Oh, this is great," and then we had the song. But generally I would give Phil some stuff that I had written. Usually they were instrumentals, actually... for instance, *Try Me* was an instrumental – but then Phil put vocals around it and it was very nice.

'It was all about the music for me, so being German and not speaking any English wasn't much of a problem. In fact Andy [Parker, UFO's drummer] told me I should consider myself lucky that I didn't ➔

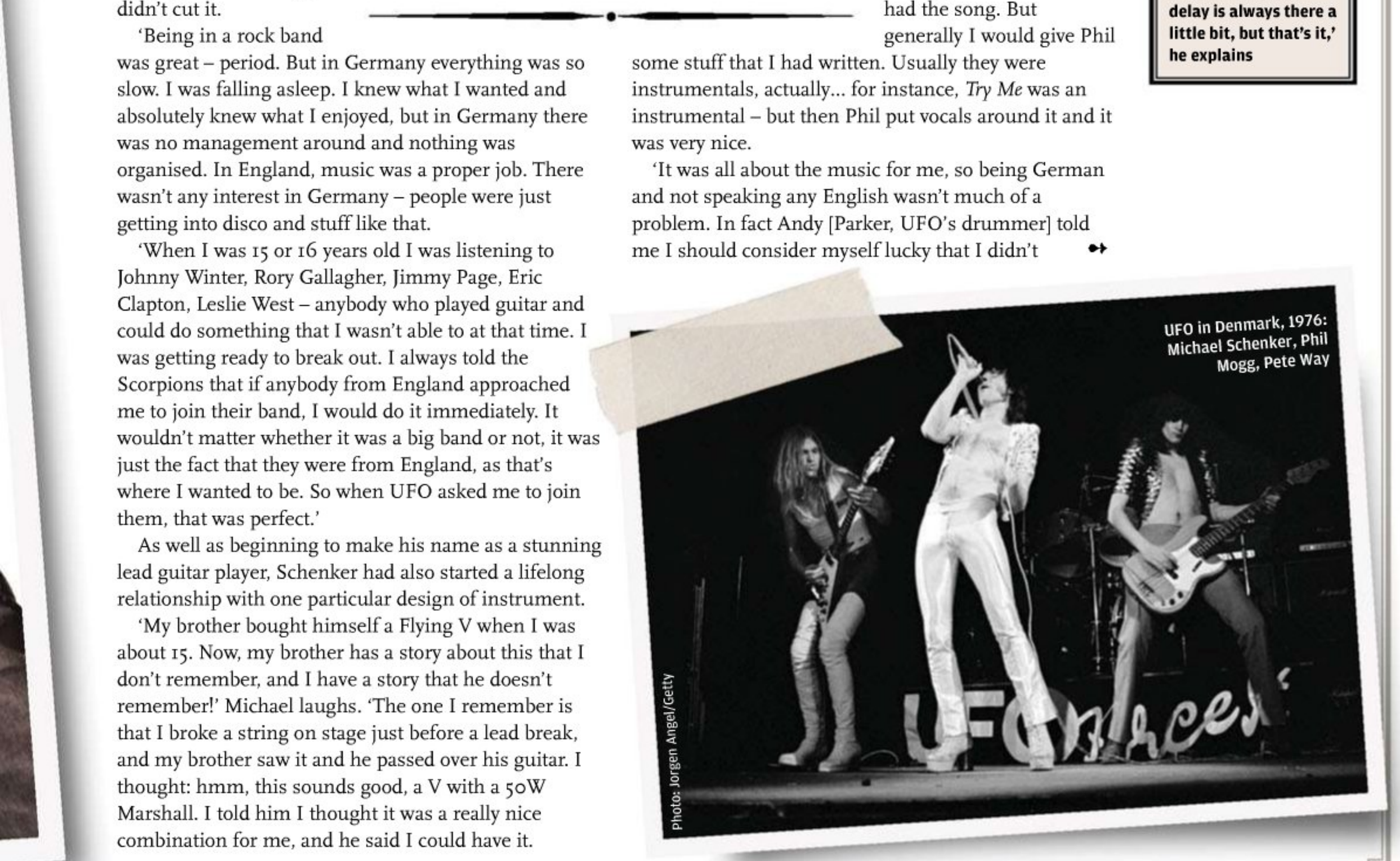
Gear

Guitars

Michael is currently using the new 'Retro', 'Kaleidoscope' and 'Strangers in the Night' models of his signature Dean Flying Vees – all of which should be released to the public soon

Amps

Schenker uses Marshall JCM800 2205 amps, while for effects he uses chorus and delay. 'The chorus I use very rarely, only if it was used on the production of the original song. And delay is always there a little bit, but that's it,' he explains



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McAuley Schenker Group, 1989. Schenker will reunite with singer Robin McAuley for the US leg of his *Temple Of Rock* tour

Schenker in '99, the year of the MSG's *Unforgiven*

understand what the rest of them were saying!' Michael chuckles. 'But there wasn't much of a problem fitting in. I didn't see anything until later when Phil got very aggressive and started fighting people... then I got a bit worried, and that led to problems.'

UFO's standing continued to rise and rise – and for Michael that was a problem too. 'The success scared me. I wasn't looking for it, and at that point I didn't really understand what success meant. I just wanted to be able to do what Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page and Leslie West did to me – I just wanted to give people goose pimples, whether at the Marquee club or wherever.

'My first real experience of the big time came when UFO went to San Francisco and all of a sudden there were 6000 people with their lighters in their hands. I was saying, woah, what is this? Then we did *Lights Out* and had the first hit – that was when I got scared. I couldn't deal with it. It became all about pressure. I didn't like that feeling of having to do things. My enjoyment at that time was about the steps we made musically. The actual progress from the Scorpions' *Lonesome Crow* to UFO's *Phenomenon*, then *Force It*, *No Heavy Petting*, *Lights Out* – every time there was a step further.'

By late 1978 Schenker and Mogg's relationship had broken down. Michael returned to join brother Rudolph and his old friends in the Scorpions, but he wasn't short on offers from other people – Ozzy, Aerosmith, and the Rolling Stones all asked him to join.

'When I left UFO the band was just about at its peak, and I left to join the Scorpions, who were about to take over at the peak. I helped the Scorpions out on *Lovedrive* and we started to tour and I thought, shit, I made a mistake here. I've just jumped off this train. I had my own vision of what I needed to do, which was about musical and personal development and being able to experiment with different aspects of music at my own pace without pressure. It wasn't about becoming famous and rich. So I couldn't have fulfilled my ideas with bands like Ozzy Osbourne, or Aerosmith, or the Scorpions – my vision was different to their vision.

'In fact it would have been really bad for my brother if I had joined the Scorpions, for two reasons. First, I would have interfered and he would have had to let me do most of the writing. Also, I would have been a weight for them. It would have been harder for them to get to where they wanted because it was not my vision. So it was best for me, and I think my brother will realise this as he gets older – or maybe he has already realised this – that it was a good thing that I wasn't there. It was never meant to be.'

> *'Success scared me. I wasn't looking for it. I just wanted to give people goose pimples'*

In 1979 Michael put together MSG – the Michael Schenker Group – a band that has featured a revolving line-up of musicians in its 30-year history. In 1993 and the early noughties he also rejoined UFO for three albums, and in recent years he's been spotted playing live guest slots with the Scorpions. With artists like Slash and Paul Gilbert citing him as an influence, in 2010 Schenker was finally presented with a Marshall '11' award given 'to those artists and musicians who represent rock'n'roll excess and livin' on the edge'.

'It was funny because in the early '80s my brother called me up and said: "Michael, you would never believe what is happening over here – everybody is playing your style of guitar. You have to see this, they're taking over." I thought maybe he was just mucking about so I didn't take much notice. Then at one point I got really cheated by a record company. I said to my

Amped AND READY

'In terms of amps I still use my usual Marshall JCM800 2205,' Schenker says. 'But I must say that after all these years am I ready to create my own amplifier. I've accumulated quite a few ideas and I want to put together a Michael Schenker model, but I'm just looking for the right company.'

So what sound is he looking for? 'Ah, that's something that I have no words for, to be honest. When I was doing the first UFO record with producer Leo Lyons, I had to explain to him what sound I was looking for with the little English that I had. I said: "Imagine your finger without the bone." That's how I described this sound. It's a particular type of sound – there's an aggression to it but I don't just like a loud, fretful sound.'

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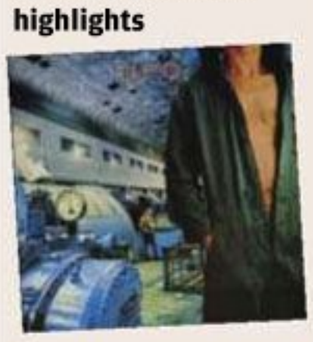
Listen up

UFO
Lights Out
1977
Although relationships within the band would turn sour the next year, *Lights Out* was UFO's crowning glory. The title track and *Love To Love* are particular highlights



MICHAEL SCHENKER
Temple Of Rock
2011
With ex-Scorpion Herman Rarebell on drums, ex-UFO Pete Way on bass, and guest appearances from Leslie West, Don Airey, Neil Murray, Carmine Appice and even Rudolph Schenker among others, *ToR* is classic Schenker rock

And another thing...

Michael's 2000 album *The Odd Trio* featured 'Harry Cobham' on bass and 'Kathy Brown' on drums – both pseudonyms for Schenker himself, who wrote, played and produced everything on the album. 'It was one of those things that I had to do, at least once!' he laughs.

brother, "I've had enough of this shit." He said: "Oh, can I use your black and white image?" I said, yeah, go ahead. That is how he ended up with the black and white guitar too.

'Then I guess I sorted things out and carried on, but I didn't take much notice of what was happening or who was becoming successful. Once in a while I would hear little things like Slash or Kirk Hammett was a fan of mine, but I wouldn't make a big deal about it. But then I got an award and thought, shit, this is all serious! Wow, it was true, it wasn't just a bunch of rubbish. It was a pleasant surprise.

'I was rushed from the stage to do pictures for this award and on the way there was this guy with grey hair and I realised it was Jimmy Page. It was funny because I had never met him before. So I went over to shake his hand and said: "Hi Jimmy, I'm Michael Schenker, nice to eventually meet you, sorry I've got to rush off." I'm absolutely still a fan. When you haven't met these people that you admired so much, it's a completion thing to finally chat to them.'

Coming back to play with the Scorpions is part of the same journey. 'Rudolph is crazy – he always loved playing on stage. It's very rare that we get to play together, but I think there'll be more of it in the near future. We're as close as you can get as brothers, considering he's seven years older than me.

Photo: Kevin Estrada

'I think Rudolph and I have fulfilled what we dreamt of. Now we can share things'

'I think we're at a time of life where we can start showing up together. I think we both needed to experience what we did for different reasons. We've each fulfilled what we dreamt of and can share things without expectations getting in the way. It's about growing up, in a sense.'

Michael's most recent sense of fulfilment comes from his new album, *Temple Of Rock*. Of course lead guitar takes centre stage, but just as interesting is the line-up of legends – Pete Way, Carmine Appice, Leslie West – who joined him... plus a very special contributor.

'I started off as usual, with no idea what the end result would be. My thoughts are all lead guitar orientated, but I was careful how much I played. I didn't want to overload – I wanted to keep it tasteful and balanced. For me, a song is a song, but when it gets to the lead part I take it on another journey.

'Michael Voss wrote an intro for the album that I liked a lot but I said it needed a big voice to do the speaking parts, and at the same time I got a phone call to play guitar on William Shatner's album. I said, I can't believe it – this is what we need! We asked him if he would do it, he said yes. So it all came together.

'I tell you, life is an incredible phenomenon. It hits you with surprise after surprise – it's unbelievable for a guy who didn't even know how he ended up on stage in the first place. I didn't know why I was there, I just accepted it. Now as I grow older, things look different. I'm having fun experiencing things that I never did before, and that's great. It's not like how I thought... you just get old and there's nothing to do anymore. For me it's more like an exchange – you win some and you lose some.

'When I started MSG in 1980 it was about developing as a person and as a musician at my own pace. Now I feel like I have finished my exams and I can get out and live. It's uplifting... the filing system in my head has 40 years of experience coming back. It's like something had been repressed but all of a sudden it's been freed, and I have a whole new wave of development floating out of me again.'

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Changing *Man*

A new live Blu-ray recording catches Richard Thompson in his ideal setting – in front of an enthusiastic audience and in scintillating form alongside his ever-brilliant band. Interview by **Matt Lamy**

'I had forgotten a lot about what it sounded like, so it is a nice surprise to finally see it,' Richard Thompson says of his new – and first ever – Blu-ray release, *Live At Celtic Connections*, filmed last January in Glasgow. 'I'm happy with the visuals and the audio; I would always be slightly self-critical of the performance. But when you take a live performance, you get a few warts. You're playing live and that's part of the energy, and I think the energy is great. A few things are out of tune, but that's all part of the spirit.'

After 45 years in the business Thompson knows how to deal with everything from sprawling festivals to intimate clubs, but he's one of those performers who shines when the audience is up close. Does he pick which venue to play with that in mind?

'Oh no – I couldn't care less about the audience,' he laughs. 'Actually, I don't have those kinds of options. I have to play in the largest venues that I can fill. The Royal Concert Hall in Glasgow where we recorded the *Celtic Connections* show is a 1200 or 1400 seater, which is a size of venue that I play quite a lot and I'm used to that. But I love playing smaller places, it's fantastic. Playing for 100 people is absolutely brilliant. Sometimes I can do that. Sometimes on my schedule there will be a day off and we'll say, well, what about playing this little club for a night? It's nice to have that kind of variety. To go from that to playing at a festival where you can be in front of 15,000 people... that's a whole other experience.

'There's no such thing as an ideal size of audience. The genius performers, people like Springsteen, are able to make the largest venues intimate. People like Michael Jackson... I didn't necessarily enjoy his music all that much, but as a performer he could do that stadium thing where there is a kind of intimacy about what he's doing.

'I hope I never have to play stadiums on a regular basis... well, it would be a terrible burden to earn that much money,' he chuckles again. 'I could probably learn to live with it, but to communicate with that size audience is quite hard. So, there is a size limit that I would be comfortable with when it comes to doing a concert. But usually as soon as the first note is played, all those thoughts go out the window – you forget about it and you focus on the audience that's in front of you.'

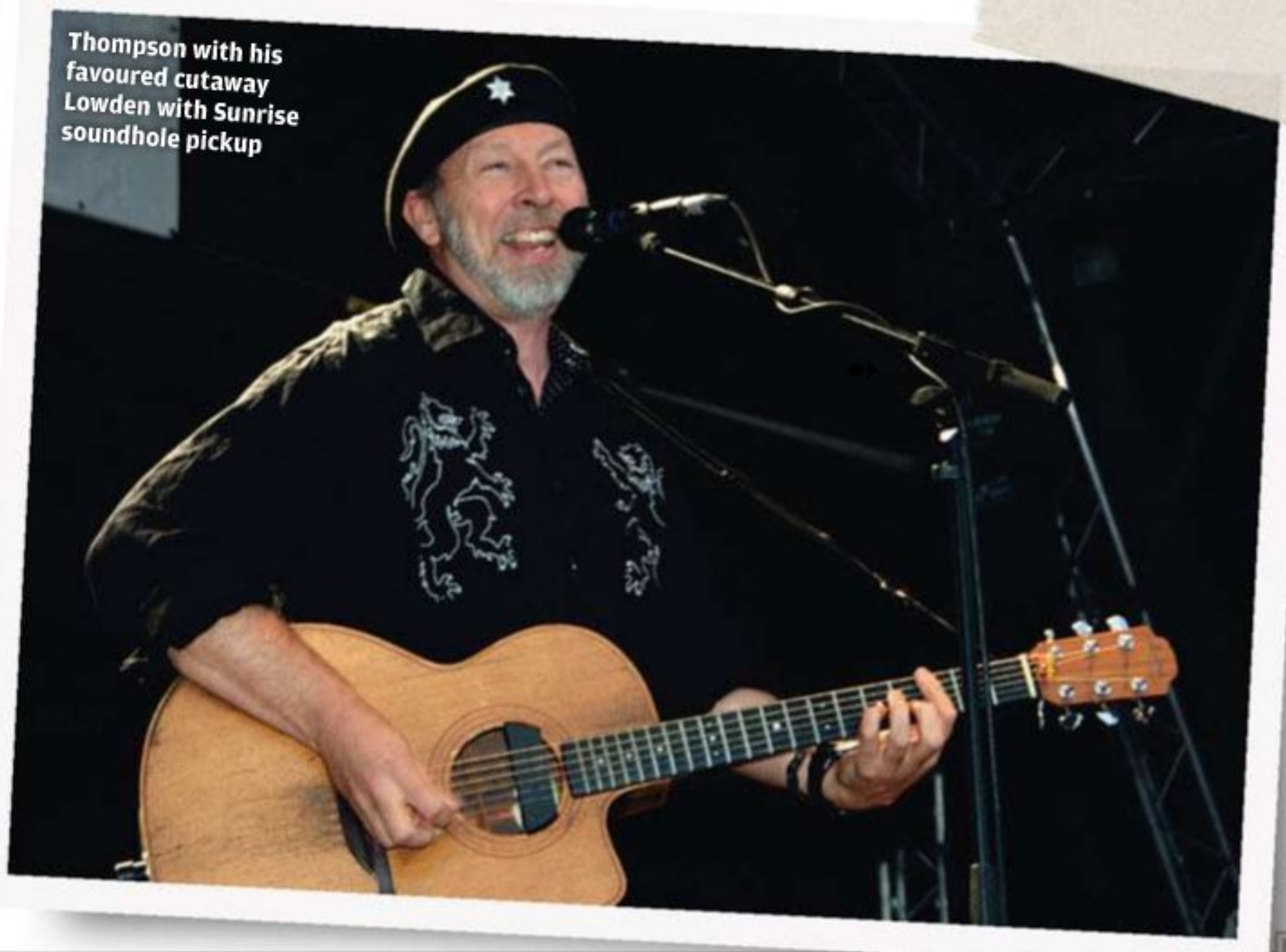
One thing Thompson doesn't forget about, though, is the band. 'I think it's good to be comfortable and uncomfortable at the same time when it comes to band members,' he says. 'I think you don't want to be so comfortable that you're complacent. Sometimes you see bands that have been together for decades and there's no edge, there's no spark, they all know what's going to happen, even the audience knows what's going to happen – there's no surprise. Sometimes it's nice to have some familiar elements and some new elements.

'The band isn't a fixed thing. It evolves. You change things up to see what happens'

'In the band I have at the moment there is Pete Zorn who has been with me in various capacities for 30 years. He started out playing bass, he now plays ➔

Guitars

'Acoustically I'm playing mostly Lowdens made in Northern Ireland,' Thompson says. 'They're a great company and they work to a very high standard. I'm happy to play them and I have my own signature model. In terms of electrics I'm playing Fender-ish guitars. In some cases with Fender necks and bodies, but with all kinds of different pickups and different wiring. One of my favourites looks like a Tele but it has a three pickups, various modifications and a contoured body.'

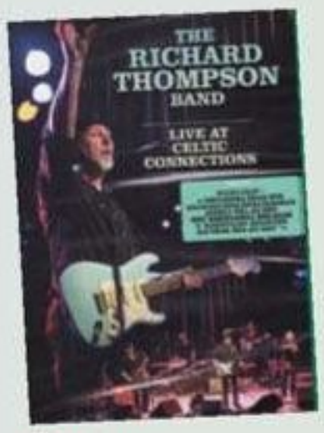


Thompson with his favoured cutaway Lowden with Sunrise soundhole pickup

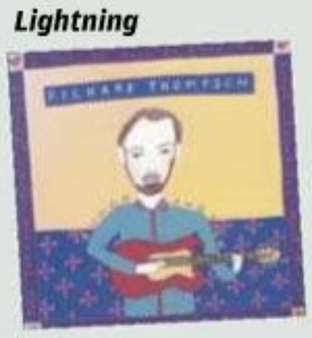
Caption

Listen up

THE RICHARD THOMPSON BAND
Live At Celtic Connections (2012)
The new live Blue-ray showcases Richard's newest, Grammy-nominated, album *Dream Attic* before the band lets loose on some old favourites



RICHARD THOMPSON
Rumor And Sigh (1991)
Richard's most commercially successful album, and well-received by critics, it includes probably his best-known song, *1952 Vincent Black Lightning*



And another thing...

Richard wrote the soundtrack for the documentary *Grizzly Man*, a film about the life and tragic death of bear enthusiast Timothy Treadwell

everything except the bass! Not that I don't like his bass playing, he's a great bass player as well. But he's so useful – how could I fire Pete? I'd have to replace him with three people, he's fantastic.

'On the other hand, it was Joel Zifkin's first tour last year, he's only just come in the band. I've known him for a long time but we haven't worked together much, so he's sort of the fresh face. Taras [Prodaniuk] on bass has been in the band for three or four years, so he's fairly new as well. And Michael Jerome has been there for 15 years. I like to think of the band as not necessarily a fixed thing – it's something that evolves.

'You might take a tour and just go out as a trio – guitar, bass, drums – just as a change-up to see what happens. That's totally invigorating. It's a challenge to yourself, first of all. You're not quite sure what's going to happen and if you're going to be able to pull it off. And it's a change-up for the audience who might have seen you in other formats, so they'll be seeing something different and seeing you challenged, which might make for a more interesting show.'

Those four-plus decades years in the business, from the early days of Fairport Convention to an extensive body of solo work, means he isn't short of choices when it comes to a set list.

'Deciding what to play is tough,' Thompson says. 'It's a mixture of things. I probably start with two lists – what I think the audience would like to hear, and what I would like to play. Sometimes those meet in the middle. If I'm giving 50 per cent of familiar things I may then include some more recent things, or some songs that have never been recorded, or some songs from the next album. I might drop five songs I did on the last tour because they're getting over-familiar and replace them with things from the vaults, maybe a song I haven't played live in 30 years or so. It's a mixture of those kinds of elements.'

Thompson's most eclectic live set in the last decade has been his *1000 Years Of Popular Music* project, where he recreates music ranging from the medieval *Sumer Is Icumen In* to Britney Spears' 2000 opus *Oops!... I Did It Again*. After concentrating on other projects, he hopes to tour the UK with *1000 Years...* again in 2013.

'*1,000 Years* is an idea that's so far out there that you might think it's stupid, but I think it's interesting to attempt it and fail. To me the shows fail because we can't bring the amount of expertise you'd need to each era of music and each genre of music – it's not possible. We take on opera, we do Purcell; there's no way we could do that to the standard required. But if the audience sees us attempting it, they might forgive us and see that it's a good song and then dig out a version by Janet Baker and see what that sounds like. So the shows are kind of a sampler to inspire the audience to go and do its own research, to find its own gems.'

And what of taking on Britney? 'I think *Oops!* is a good song – I wouldn't do it if it wasn't. The association with Britney is there and there is a kind of irony to the performance, but then there's another layer where it is a good song, so it's satisfying. Ultimately it's not just about poking fun or taking the piss – there are some values there. There is lots of music out there that doesn't have any redeeming features, so it helps to have some solid foundations to what you're doing.'

And there are plenty more projects in the pipeline. 'I'm touring in Japan in April and I'm playing on a cruise next week. I did it last year and it's terrific. It's all really good singer-songwriters – Lyle Lovett, John Hiatt, Patty Griffin – it's wonderful. You can escape to the artists' deck if you want to get away from the fans , but the audience tends to be pretty cool. If you're trying to have a quiet meal in the restaurant people generally leave you alone. Just occasionally somebody might come up and say: "I know I'm being a pest, and I know you're having your dinner, but I'm going to annoy you anyway" [laughs]. But it's a great musical experience.

'Then the plan is to record an electric album in May, which looks like it's going to happen. And it'll be all new original songs.' Thompson smiles. 'He said confidently... not having written half of them yet!'

Getting THE MESSAGE

Known for writing songs with a message, Richard Thompson explains how to get meaning across without being too heavy-handed. 'I think there is a time that as a songwriter you say: things are so bad I'm going to write a song that names names. You don't hold back, you don't cover it in any kind of metaphor, you just say: things are shit, it's time for the revolution, let's kick out the despots. There is a time for that kind of song.

'I think otherwise you're better served by writing under a few veils with political songs. So you write political allegory, you write a political song as a love song, or as a kind of a satire, where it's a little softer and not so in your face. I think if you do that the songs have a longer shelf life... because they're more general, you can apply them to more situations.'

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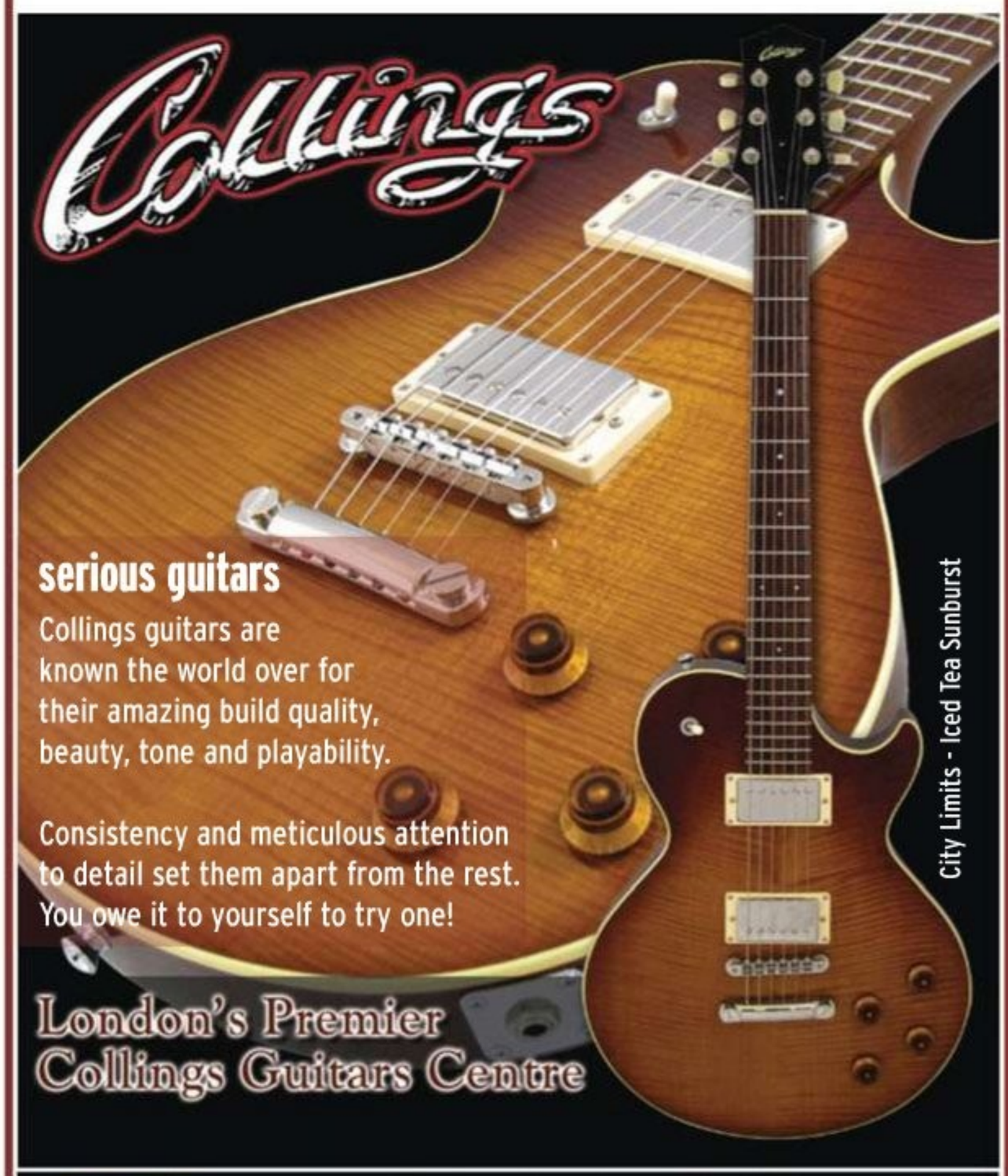

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Photo: Richard E. Aaron/Getty

Maybe*amazed*

It just doesn't get any bigger than playing guitar and bass for the legendary – and currently spectacularly on-form – Paul McCartney. Brian Ray has that very task, and he tells **Lars Mullen** all about it

What's it like getting the call to become a member of Paul McCartney's band, performing some of the most memorable pop songs known on Planet Earth? Ask Brian Ray: he knows. His first-ever McCartney gig was at the Superbowl in 2002, playing alongside Rusty Anderson (guitar), Wix Wickens (keyboards) and, of course, drummer Abe Laboriel. 'My name had been put forward, so this was the audition,' Brian explains. 'It was nerve-wracking, to say the least.

'Rehearsals went well, and we all had dinner that night. I didn't know if I had the job. I was sure this was the last time I was going to see Paul, so I went over and thanked him for the privilege of working with him. Later that night, as we were leaving the hotel restaurant, he's giving everyone a goodbye hug like he does, and he says "Oh, Brian, welcome aboard. Stick with Abe and Rusty, they'll show you the ropes." I turned and said to Abe, "Did he just say what I think he said?" He replied, "Yeah, dude!"'

Brian Ray didn't just magically emerge from the woodwork to nab the gig: he's got form. Born in California, he began playing at the age of nine. His break came as a member of a combo called the Crypt Kicker Five, who found themselves playing a benefit organised by the infamous Phil Kaufman, 'road mangler' to the stars, raising money to offset the fines he incurred taking Gram Parsons' body out to the desert and burning it (long story). Phil introduced Brian to R&B singer Etta James, and Brian became her musical director for 14 years. Along the way he wrote many songs, including a co-write on Smokey Robinson's *One Heartbeat*. He collaborated with Rita Coolidge and Peter Frampton. It's been a long road...

'My mother was smart enough to play songs to me when I was still in the womb,' Brian smiles. 'As a kid, we had a record player that could record and cut a disc in front of your eyes, like an early version of a tape-to-tape. We're talking about 1958. We would sit around the piano and sing and cut records. My big sister Jean would babysit me and play all this great rock'n'roll.

'I used to listen to a pirate radio station blasting out a heavy signal from Tijuana, Mexico, with DJ Wolfman Jack playing early R&B. I heard the Beatles on radio stations like KFWB and KHJ, so when they arrived I was already way into them. I just thought, this is a club I want to be a member of! They were like a little cool-guy team, all in on the same joke. They didn't look slick or over-produced. I loved songs like *Baby's In Black* and *Don't Bother Me*... very cool, dark and edgy, with lots of friction. It wasn't all cheery. We kids went nuts for the Beatles. I was nine in '64 when they were on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. What a life-changing day!

'My parents organised piano lessons, but I wanted to play boogie-woogie and rock'n'roll like Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Johnson. I did a recital, nearly passing out through nerves. When I finished, it was like, "Okay, now can I play guitar?" My older brother had been given a Gibson LG-1 – so unfair! – and he'd show me his guitar lessons, and I overtook him in no time. Meanwhile, I used to sit side-stage and watch my sister, who went on to be a folk-rock star with her husband. They were called Jim and Jean and were on the Verve Folkways and Philips labels. I literally watched folk turn into folk-rock in front of my very eyes as they started using Hofners, fuzzboxes and Ampeg guitars instead of acoustics and autoharps. They'd hang out with Tim Hardin and Bob Dylan in clubs like The Bitter End and The Gaslight in New York's Bleeker Street in the East Village between '63 and '67. That gave me so much inspiration as a young songwriter.

'The Beatles were like a cool-guy team, all in on the same joke. They didn't look slick'

'During the mid-'80s I decided to put my energy into songwriting with Steve LeGassick. We'd write from 11 am to five pm, five days a week. A lot of songs were okay, while others did really well... *One Heartbeat* is now topping 3 million airplays worldwide.

'For me, the riff, melody and title come easy; the tricky bit is filling in the lyrics so that they're air-tight, graceful, and cool. They have to dance, make sense and sound good year after year. If I could do that each time, I'd have hundreds of hits... like Paul McCartney!'

Between touring with Macca, Brian found time to write and record his recent album *This Way Up*, crammed with infectious rock riffs and gutsy vocals. He's also been touring his Tourette Del Sol project with an Argentinian band, Nube 9. 'They perform covers from the '60s and '70s like you can't believe,' ➔

Gear

Guitars

Brian's extensive selection includes SGs, Les Paul Juniors, a Thinline Tele, a Taylor 12-string, a Gretsch Double Anniversary, a blonde ES-335, a Duesenberg... and his stage favourite, a '57 Les Paul goldtop

Amps

For the last McCartney tour he used a Marshall JTM45 and a 20W handwired head, wired in tandem. For solo work he uses Divided By 13 amps: he has four and currently loves the BTR23 with KT88s

Effects

Rack Systems of Hollywood inform us that Ray's 'travel board' contains a mixture of the practical and the tasty: an E-H Hum Debugger, a Fulltone Octafuzz, a Suhr Riot distortion, a Boss tuner, a Tortuga Martini chorus and a Line 6 Echopark delay. His 'big board' chain starts with a Foxrox Octron and then goes MXR EQ, Guitar Systems Fuzz Tool, Yeti fuzz/wah, Buff Puff boost, TC Polytune, Tortuga Martini chorus, Strymon El Capistan delay, G-Lab reverb, and a Line 6 M9 multi-FX. Neat!

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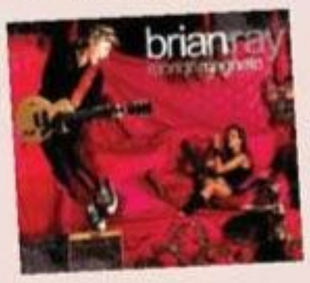
(Photo: Lester Cohen/WireImage/Getty)

Paul McCartney, Dave Grohl and Brian Ray onstage at the Grammys, February 2012

Listen up

BRIAN RAY
This Way Up
(2010)
Ray's latest album covers bright feelgood power pop with a nod to classic rock but stays firmly rooted in blues and R&B, all played on Brian's enviable collection of gorgeous vintage gear

BRIAN RAY
Mondo Magneto
(2006)
After many years of writing and recording with a whole host of artists Brian finally made an album under his own name. It features many of his prestigious and talented friends including Etta James



he laughs. 'I put together a tour in South America playing my stuff and few covers, including Neil Young's *Cinnamon Girl*, which he wrote about my sister Jean.'

Back with Paul McCartney; how did Brian feel after getting the big thumbs-up? 'I didn't let myself get too sold on the idea that I was really in the band and touring with them at first,' he admits. 'I rushed home and spent five weeks preparing for rehearsals for the next tour. After just one session with the band, Paul said "Okay guys, sounds good, see you tomorrow." I just thought, oh my god, I'm going on tour with Paul McCartney. He's not only a gentleman – he's as funny as hell, smarter than a diamond is bright and as kind as a child. On that first tour I had my head down concentrating on my parts, not really aware on how I was doing, but it must have been okay, as here were are 10 years later on another world tour.'

> *'Paul is as funny as hell, smarter than a diamond is bright and as kind as a child'*

Brian's role is vocalist and guitar player – and bassist when Macca swaps to guitar or piano. 'At first I used an '80s Guild M85 bass. The idea was to replicate Paul's sound without showing up with a Hofner Violin bass, which is his identity. The Guild was great... soft and pillowy, definitely a short-scale sound, but it felt like 110lbs! After a few trips to the chiropractor I was ready for something else. Gibson asked if I wanted to try an SG bass, and I'm still using it. The tubby low end is ideal, and it only weighs about 8lbs.

'Paul's bass work is stunning. If you isolate his lines in your head, you'll notice that he not only plays with impeccable timing, he's always playing a counterpoint to the melody or the harmony of the song. It's almost classical in nature how he constructs a song, and he's not writing it down – he's actually feeling it.

'On *Sgt Pepper's*, for example, he tracked on piano or guitar first, then in the late hours overdubbed his bass, honing in on every note and the tone of every line. That record has so many stunning lines on it – *Getting Better, For The Benefit Of Mr Kite* and so many more. I often get asked what my favourite Beatles song is, but that's like asking my favourite tree or flower. The show, top to bottom, is a pleasure. They're songs I've adored my whole life. There's not a bad one in the bunch.'

Brian's main stage guitar for many years has been a '57 Gibson Les Paul goldtop he bought at the age of 18 for $850. 'I was astounded at the time at how much I probably overpaid for it. It was my main guitar on the whole of the last Paul McCartney tour, and every night that I played with the late Etta James. The rosewood fretboard is really dark through years of sweat. Gibson used old wood back then, so add over 50 years of use and you can hear why this guitar has such an amazing tone. It's weather-checked and cracked – a bit like Keith Richards, who's also played it, along with Jimmy Page, Mick Taylor and Hubert Sumlin. It has a crazy rock'n'roll history.

'On the last tour I used two Marshalls, a JTM45 on halfway and a cranked 20W head. Paul has this great tone that'll take your eyebrows off. He's got Vox amps for guitar and Mesa/Boogie for bass. I play my own material using Divided By 13 amps. My BTR23 is like an early metal-fronted Marshall 50, but with a master volume, allowing that concussed overdriven sound at low volumes. It's fantastic for recording.

'I'm more of a pedalboard guy as opposed to rackmount effects. A lot of guys from the '80s and '90s have gone back to pedals because it involves real components that produce real sounds. There's a down side as you have to literally dance on the pedals, but a gigbag and a small pedalboard works for me.

'On my own South America tour it was so satisfying to get out there, sweat and have to restring my own guitar. To go from a stadium of 55,000 with Paul to clubs of 800 happy, crazy Argentinian fans just brings a tear to my eye. I think that's enough for me. I'm a happy man, and that's why I do this.'

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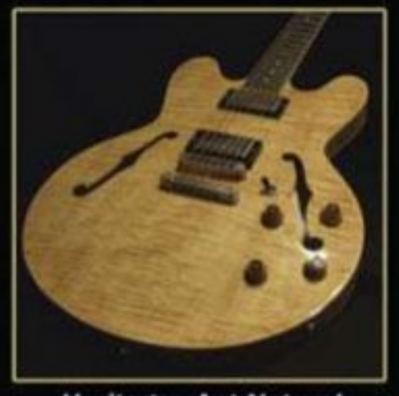

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TREASURED POSSESSIONS

Philip Sayce and his '63 FENDER STRATOCASTER

Born in Wales, raised in Canada, the blues star with the stinging reverb depends on an old lady from California

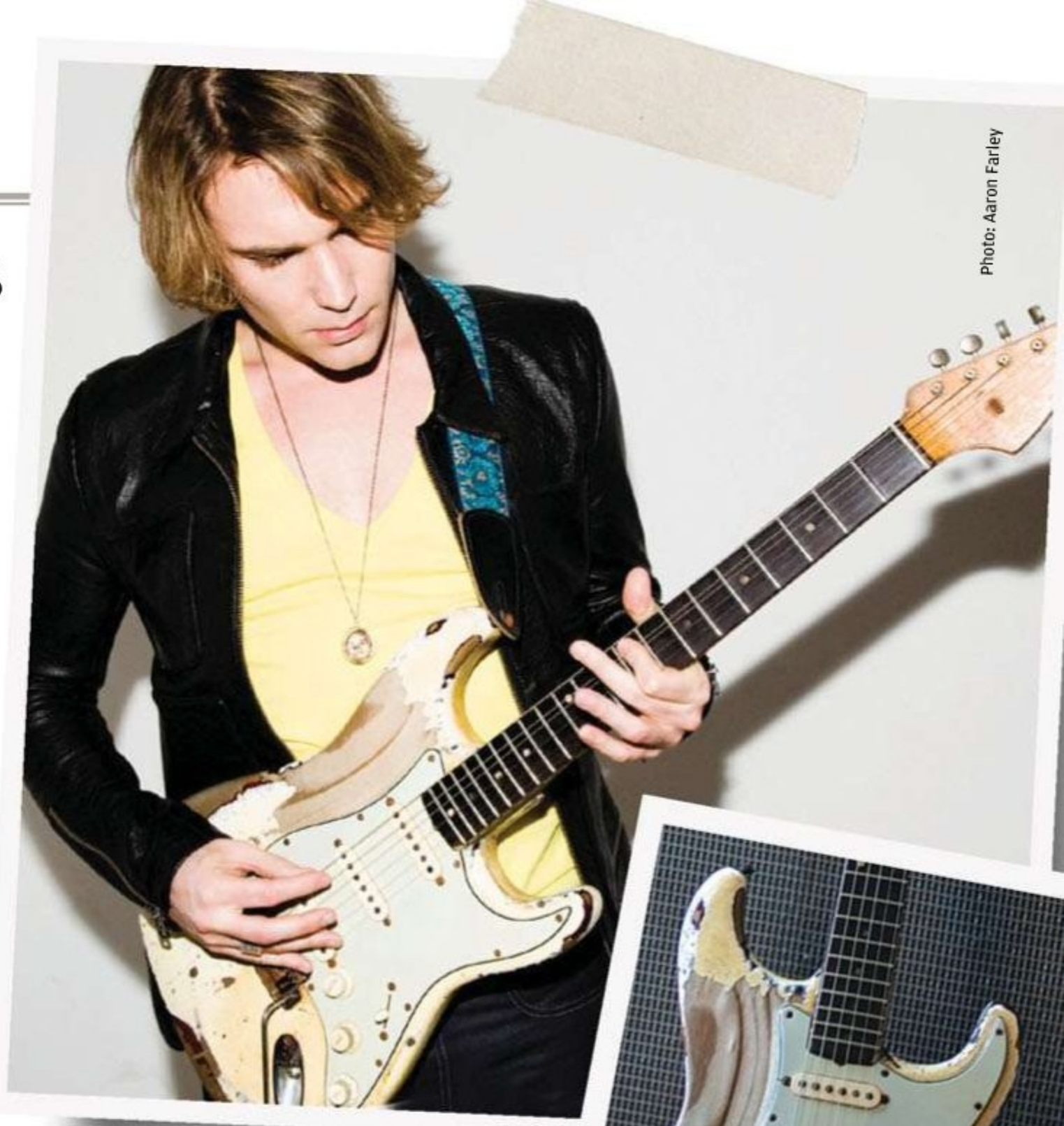

Photo: Aaron Farley

When, as a 20-year old in 1997, Philip Sayce first landed the job of backing Canadian blues legend Jeff Healey, he doggedly saved his earnings for three years until he had a pot big enough to bag himself a pre-CBS Strat. 'Guitar dude' contacts in his native Toronto were utilised, a man with a '63 for sale was tracked down to Vancouver Island, and the guitar was kindly shipped for Sayce for a test-drive.

'I still remember the delivery truck pulling up outside,' remembers Philip. 'I opened up the flightcase, played it and immediately it was like, "She's sold!" It was absolutely mint when I got it. It's olympic white, but as it wore away I saw this beautiful sunburst finish coming through. My understanding was that they would paint them sunburst, then someone would ring up and say we need a coloured one, and they'd spray over it.'

Since then the guitar has been all around the world many times over and has put in sterling service night after night. There have been constant running repairs, but Philip insists it's not down to over-aggressive treatment.

'Sometimes you're at the gig trying to capture the emotion of the moment and you'll realise you're bleeding. I guess that's heavy playing, but there's some *really* aggressive players out there. I am a sweaty player, though, and that does damage on a Strat or anything that has those kind of moving bridge pieces, they just seize right up. I guess it's like your favourite pair of jeans... you put them on every day and they start to wear holes. You put a patch on and you wear through that so you put another patch on, and you just keep going.'

Philip clearly cares deeply about his guitar; he even calls her 'Mother'. 'People were like, "Hey, you got a name for that guitar?" because I took her everywhere. I thought, this guitar is precious to me so I'm going call it Mother. Also, it's a bit like "Man, that guitar is a mother!" So you can see it that way, too. It's all out of love, though!'

Pots get changed every couple of years, as do the tuners due to Sayce's penchant for heavy strings, and that emotional playing means the vibrato arm is a regular casualty, although he still has the original somewhere. The only other non-pre-CBS parts are a couple of GraphTech saddles on the high E and B. 'I found that they changed the sound a little bit but now they've worked in I don't really notice it. It's better than not having a string at all.'

> *'Sometimes you're trying to capture the moment and you'll realise you're bleeding'*

Unfortunately, quite early on, a little bit of 'over-exuberant playing' saw off the original pickups. 'One night I grabbed a bottle from the audience to play with and beer went all over the guitar. About three weeks later the pickups all shorted out. I think the beer just ate away at them.'

A friend sourced some authentic '58 Strat single coils which served for a while, but Philip loves to tinker with pickups – as long as they are pre-CBS ones. He found himself a '62 Strat and liked the pickups so much he swapped them for the '58s and put them in Mother. More of a problem is the fretboard...

'I get it re-fretted about every 18 months, but I think the neck only has one re-fret left in it. The veneer board of that era is so much thinner, so there's only so many refrets you can get out of them. I'm not sure what I'm going to do. Maybe I'll try and get another pre-CBS neck for her. She's been around the block a bit but I don't ever take her for granted. I'm just grateful to have found an incredible instrument like this one.'

Album

PHILIP SAYCE

Steamroller

A strikingly raw, no-holds-barred riff fest that takes Sayce to a new level. Expect fuzzface mayhem and vintage tones courtesy of producer Dave Cobb. 'He's brilliant,' Philip glows, 'the archetypal no-rules guy. It's like "Oh wait, that sounds like it's exploding. Great, let's do more of that..."'

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FENDER
Graham Coxon Telecaster

Forget sweet Bakersfield country twang – the Blur guitarist's signature Telecaster delivers smooth warmth with one pickup but wreaks edgy havoc with the other. Review by **Richard Purvis**

FACTFILE

Fender Graham Coxon Telecaster

DESCRIPTION
Solidbody electric guitar. Made in Mexico
PRICE **£719**

BUILD **Ash body, bolt-on maple neck, 21-fret rosewood fingerboard**
ELECTRICS **Tele bridge pickup, Seymour Duncan SH-1 neck pickup; three-way switch, master volume and tone controls with 375K pots**
LEFT-HANDERS **No**
FINISH **Blonde only**

SCALE LENGTH
648mm/25.5"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 42mm
12th fret 51mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 21mm
12th fret 23mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 35mm
Bridge 53mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 2mm
12th fret bass 2mm
WEIGHT **4kg/8.8lbs**

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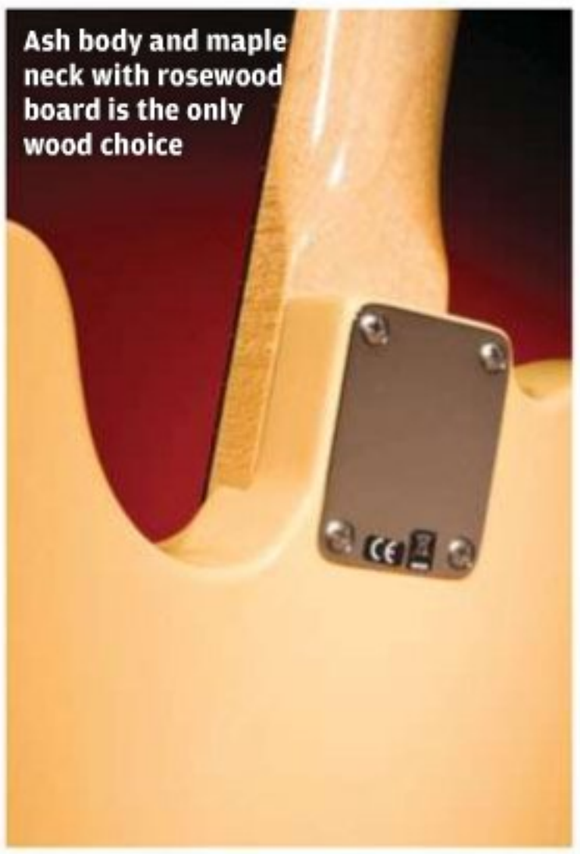
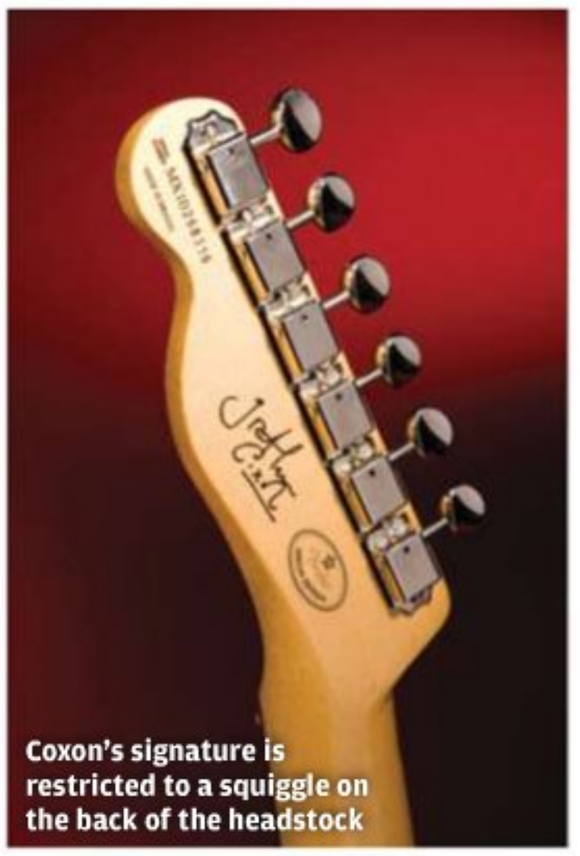
Guitar heroes aren't what they used to be. Graham Coxon has spectacles, sensible hair, the low-key demeanour of a recently-jilted chemistry student and has almost certainly never been clocked on a public fretboard at 300 notes per second. In some ways, the Blur man typifies the post-punk generation of respected guitarists who are not so much technicians as creative riff-mongers – or what might have been known in the olden days as 'mere rhythm players' in one-guitar bands. At any rate he has enough admirers to warrant a signature model from the big F, albeit one that's only available in Europe, and here it is.

Blur were never an ostentatious band so it's fitting that this should be a relatively affordable, Mexican-made instrument. Looks-wise, the only obvious modifications to the standard blackguard Tele formula are the tortoiseshell scratchplate and, squatting in the middle of it, a full-size humbucker. The finish is a rich, honeyish blonde with a hint of grain showing through, and Coxon's signature is on the back of the headstock. There are no colour options, and that golden poly gloss does clash a little with the maple neck, while the tort scratchplate could equally be said to clash with the rosewood board; either one of those juxtapositions you could get away with, but when the whole right half doesn't quite go with the whole left half... well, let's just say it's not especially pretty.


Ash body and maple neck with rosewood board is the only wood choice


Coxon's signature is restricted to a squiggle on the back of the headstock

The only obvious modifications to the blackguard formula are a tortoiseshell scratchplate and a full-sized humbucker

That humbucker is a Seymour Duncan SH-1, modelled on the late-'50s PAF and with a voice described by Duncan as 'vintage correct'. It's probably not far away from the Gibson 'bucker fitted to Coxon's own 1968 Tele, the main inspiration for this signature model. It should contrast nicely with the bridge pickup – this is also described as 'vintage' on the Fender website.

A closer look reveals one other peculiarity: the three saddles are threaded steel, like the ones fitted ➔

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Burns
Sonic
Mr Coxon has often been spotted wielding one of these beasties with its distinctive Tri-Sonic pickups
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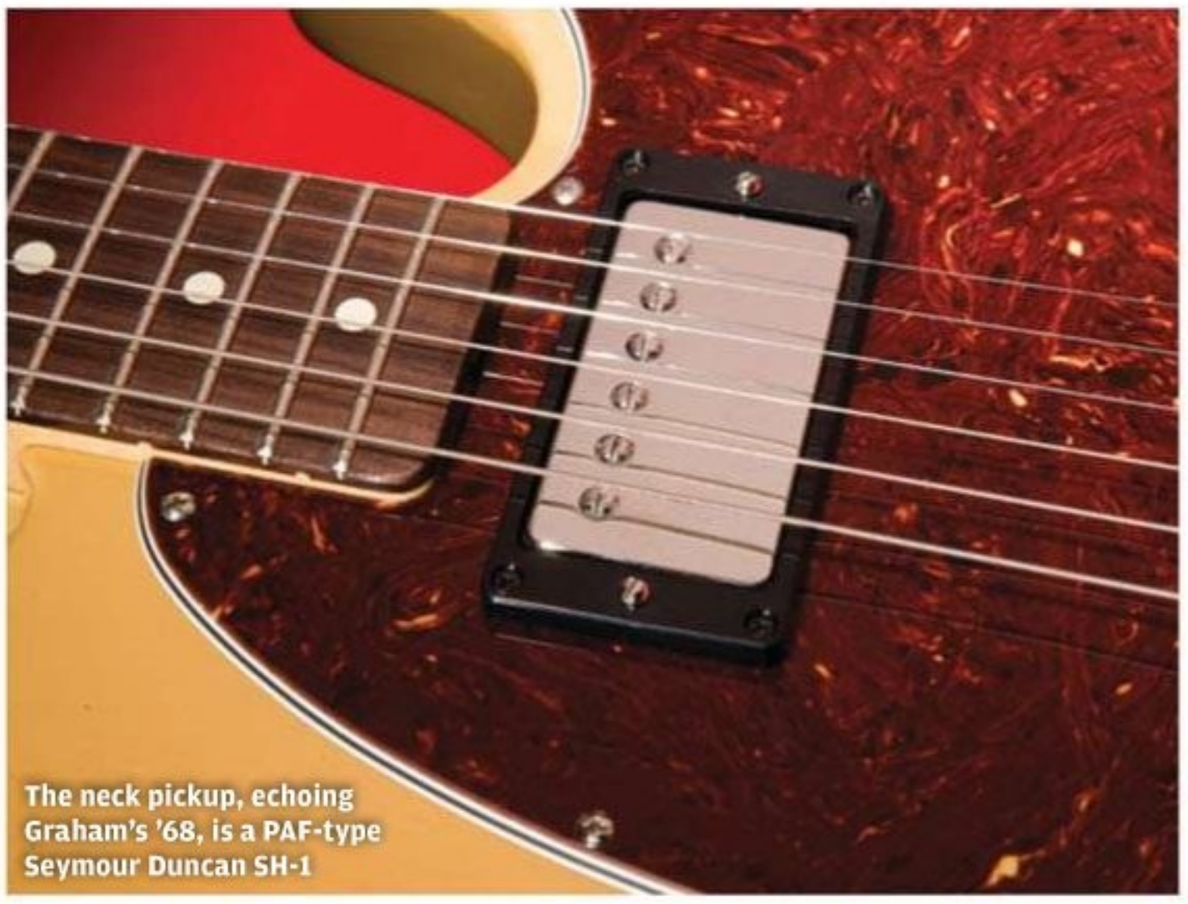
ESP
Ron Wood
A similar solidbody with a humbucker in the neck position, made in Japan with a bound alder body
RRP **£1949**

to many '60s Teles but nowadays generally reserved for US-made Jazzmasters (and generally removed, because they're a bloody pest). An even closer look reveals that the pots are 375K rather than the usual 250K, which might just add a weasel's whisker of top end. Undernourished indie waifs beware: the ash body is alarmingly heavy. It's a nice neck, though, with a modern 9.5" fingerboard radius and no issues in terms of fretting. Our review sample arrived with a surprisingly high action but this was easily settled with a few turns of the saddle screws, with no neck adjustments required.


The neck pickup, echoing Graham's '68, is a PAF-type Seymour Duncan SH-1

Sounds

Once you've installed the necessary machinery to hoist this weighty instrument out of its gigbag and onto a strap, you'll be presented with a bright and ringy tone with plenty of woody resonance. Plugging straight into a suitably British-voiced amp, our first port of call is the humbucker – and it sounds great. We're nowhere near anything that might be described as conventional Telecaster territory, but if you're looking for a combination of luscious PAF warmth and Fender sparkliness you'll find it here for sure. It's a fairy hot pickup, but not too full-on – there's enough complexity and responsiveness to please any fan of classic clean tones. Pumped up with a shot of overdrive, things get positively bluesy... good lord, have they sent us the Albert Collins model by mistake?

If you're hoping for a sprinkle of phasey sweetness on the middle setting, don't worry, you'll get it. In fact this humbucker is delectably chunky and will win friends in all sorts of genres, while the middle setting has plenty of character for chiming chords and single-note riffing. But if one pickup is fatter and darker than normal, and you want to keep the classic tonal balance of the 'both' setting, you're going to have to make the other one brighter and thinner to compensate. So it looks as if the bridge unit on this model has been, to an extent, sacrificed to the greater good of the guitar. Some people might like its brutal treble attack, but plenty won't... and there's only so much you can do with the tone control. Maybe a warmer-sounding bridge pup and a coil-tap on the 'bucker would have been a better solution to this imbalance – and in fact the SH-1 fitted here is a four-wire job, with the two spares blanked off, so it wouldn't have taken much doing – but maybe that wouldn't have been punk rock enough for our Graham.

The humbucker has a mix of luscious PAF warmth and Fender sparkliness, while the bridge pickup is vicious

The bridge saddles are the post-'58 threaded steel type

is almost closer to Strat quack than Tele cluck, with monstrous amounts of surf-ready twang on offer when you really dig in on the wound strings. The humbucker's influence means this is still a fuller sound than usual for a Fender, and things can get boomy if you're not careful with your amp settings, but there's certainly no lack of top-end chime. Indeed some players might find it to be just a little overcooked all round, though it's easily tamed – without losing any clarity – by backing off a tad on the volume control.

So if it's a wee bit spiky in the middle position, what's the bridge pup going to sound like on its own? In a word, vicious. The lack of bottom end once you take the Duncan out of the equation is striking, and we're not just talking about the difference between a single-coil and a humbucker: put the Coxon guitar up against a regular US-made Telecaster and in this position it comes off like a spitty lightweight. There may not be a huge difference in the low-end content this time, but the familiar midrange bark seems to have been stripped right out and replaced by sheer shrillness. Ramming it through a load of distortion does help, and being drowned out by the bassist is unlikely to be a problem.

Verdict

Tricky, this. Judged as a trad Telecaster, the Coxon model has arguable flaws; judged as a guitar that happens to look like a Tele, it fares a lot better... in two of the three pickup positions. The

FINAL SCORE

FENDER GRAHAM COXON TELECASTER	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**16**/20
Value for money	**17**/20
Looks	**16**/20
TOTAL	**85%**

FRET-King by Trev Wilkinson

JD

"Jerry Donahue's finest guitar yet – Fret-King is really aiming for the stars..."

Guitarist CHOICE

Dave Burrluck,
Guitarist magazine.
Guitarist Choice Award.

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Jerry Donahue.

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FRET-KING
Black Label Elise GG & Corona GW

Both these Fret-King Black Label models are endorsed by name players and are designed for maximum versatility, but with the Elise GG and the Corona GW, that's where the similarities end. Review by **Huw Price**

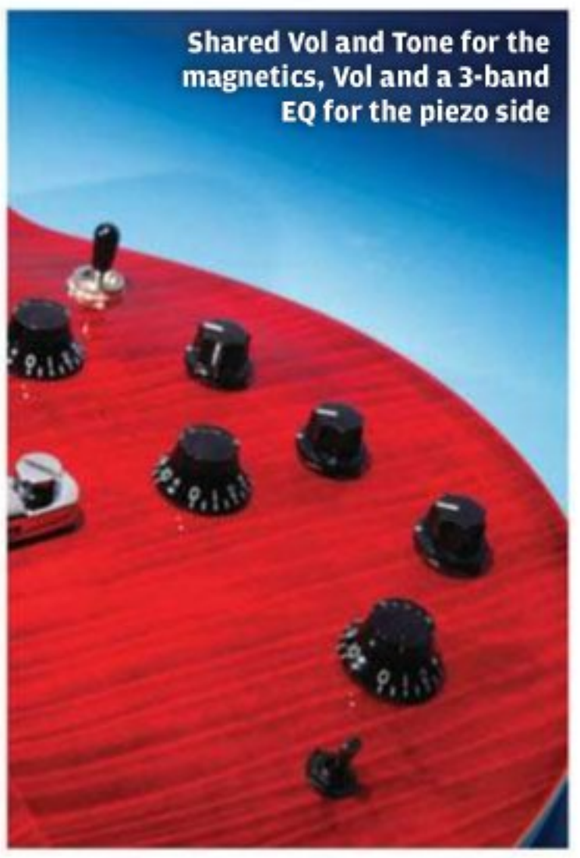
We're all well accustomed to 'name' guitars, but those in the Fret-King Black Label range are different: they come with all the expertise of designer Trevor Wilkinson, the artist input is from a range of highly-experienced UK-based professionals, and the prices are great. Could these guitars convert unbelievers to the concept of the signature model?

Elise GG

Gordon Giltrap is one of Britain's best-loved acoustic specialists, but his electric side is less well-known. This is a great-looking guitar. First impressions suggest an ES-335, but the offset body is routed from solid mahogany and then capped by a carved solid maple top with a bookmatched flame maple veneer front. The centre block stops behind the tailpiece, so there's a lot of fresh air inside the body. The headstock recalls Gibson's Trini Lopez; impoverished Foo Fighters fans, take note. The neck is mahogany and the bound rosewood fingerboard has 22 medium jumbo frets with pearl dot markers. F-hole binding provides a touch of extra class.

Giltrap's influence has largely been on pickups and controls. A PAF-style humbucker combines with a P90-style pickup that's either stacked or unusually quiet, and both share master volume and tone controls plus a three-way selector. The bridge conceals Wilkinson-designed piezo saddles that make the Elise GG a genuine acoustic-semi. The centre-detented lower black knobs provide active treble, middle and bass control and the mini-toggle provides electric and acoustic modes or both together.

A mahogany neck is glued to the hollowed-out mahogany body



Shared Vol and Tone for the magnetics, Vol and a 3-band EQ for the piezo side

The versatile Elise GG does jazz, blues, country, rock and fusion, and the sounds are suffused with woody texture

Sound

The fully rounded neck profile feels wonderful, and the GG plays effortlessly with unhindered upper fret access. Acoustically it's loud, chimey, very resonant and sustains superbly. This carries over to magnetic mode with impressive vintage-style hot humbucker tones in the bridge position and ➔

FACTFILE
Black Label Elise GG

DESCRIPTION **Solidbody guitar. Made in Korea**
PRICE **£829**

BUILD **Mahogany body with carved maple cap and book-matched flame veneer, 22-fret set mahogany neck, 10" radius rosewood fingerboard, Wilkinson WJ01 tuners, piezo bridge**
ELECTRICS **Wilkinson WVC humbucker with solid nickel cover and backing plate, Wilkinson WP90, Wilkinson designed piezo bridge saddles, electric volume and tone controls, piezo volume, treble, bass and middle controls, three-way pickup selector switch, three-way mode switch**
LEFT-HANDER **No**
FINISH **Cherry red**

SCALE LENGTH
628mm/24.75"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 43mm
12th fret 53mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 21mm
12th fret 23mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 35mm
Bridge 52mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 2mm
12th fret bass 2.5mm
WEIGHT **3.25kg/7.15lbs**

CONTACT **JHS**
01132 865 381
www.fret-king.com

FACTFILE

Black Label Corona GW

DESCRIPTION **Solidbody guitar. Made in Korea**
PRICE **£629**

BUILD **Centre-jointed alder body, 22-fret bolt-on neck with 10" radius rosewood fingerboard, Wilkinson WJ07 E-Z Lok tuners, Wilkinson WVS trem bridge**
ELECTRICS **Wilkinson WP90B humbucker, Wilkinson WHS vintage-voiced single coil and WHHBCa Prizefighter. One volume, two push/push tone controls, five-way pickup selector**
LEFT-HANDER **No**
FINISH **Cream**

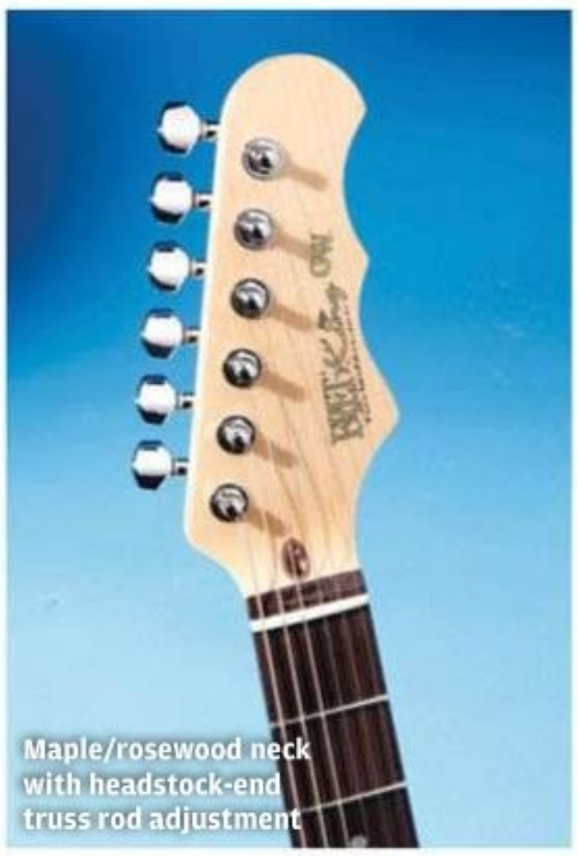
SCALE LENGTH
648mm/25.5"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 43mm
12th fret 52mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 20mm
12th fret 21mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 34.5mm
Bridge 53mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 2.5mm
12th fret bass 3.5mm
WEIGHT **4.25kg/9.35lbs**

CONTACT **JHS**
01132 865381
www.fret-king.com

Like these? Try these...

Fret-King
Black Label Corona SP
Available in sunburst, Firenza red and gloss black, the Corona SP offers a rather more conventional pickup layout with a bit of extra beef in the bridge from a Wilkinson P90
PRICE **£599**

Fret-King
Black Label Elise
If you love the shape and the idea of all that carved wood construction but you're not interested in the piezo option, check out the regular Elise model. Colour options are ash blonde and sunburst; you don't get the P90 in the neck, but you do get a Varicoil control
PRICE **£749**


Maple/rosewood neck with headstock-end truss rod adjustment

Humbucker, single coil, P90 – but the P90 is our favourite

No glassy trebles – the Corona GW has a thick, powerful quality and it's capable of a bewildering array of tones

all the clear, smooth sweetness you could hope for from a P90 in a semi. In between the sound gets surprisingly funky and the range covers jazz, blues, country, rock and fusion – always suffused with woody texture.

The GG's 'acoustic' side is electro-acoustic sounding, but it's smoother and less squawky than many piezo-loaded flattops. Playing through an electric guitar amp doesn't do this side justice. Through an acoustic amp or DI'ing straight into a mixer, we could hear the shimmering treble and bass depth this versatile system is capable of delivering.

The piezo can combine with the magnetics to create a vast array of tones. Although not completely out of phase, there are phasing issues, and some fiddling with the controls is required to get the best results. Magnetic mode is also louder, so those who are serious about combining piezo and magnetic tones might consider using the GG's split output function to feed individual acoustic and electric guitar amps using a 'Y' cable.

Corona GW

Geoff Whitehorn epitomises the term 'professional guitarist'. His approach was clearly driven by pragmatism rather than romance – hence the unconventional pickup combination. A hot Wilkinson Prizefighter humbucker in the bridge, a staggered polepiece single coil in the middle and a hum-cancelling P90 in the neck should cover most bases, but there's more – the two tone controls double up as push/push switches that coil tap the humbucker and allow combinations of the bridge plus neck or all three together. The neck and middle pickups share a single tone control and the humbucker gets its own.

The chunky alder body and beefy maple neck with its 10" radius board and 22 frets suggest that Geoff retains a soft spot for Gibson guitars while appreciating the benefits of whammy-loaded designs. The bolt-on neck joint is interesting because the neck heel is stacked, allowing a more gradual heel taper and improving upper fret access.

Sound

The GW feels very impressive, with easy playability and stable tuning. The control layout is logical and easy to navigate. We prefer push/push to push/pull, especially with tapered knobs. The GW has a thick, powerful quality. Shimmering glassy treble isn't really this guitar's forte, but it's capable of a bewildering array of tones. The articulation and dynamics of the P90 make it the standout performer; it also sounded very effective when paralleled to the middle pickup or the humbucker. The humbucker is rockier, but it retains bite and clarity even when gain levels are high. In contrast the middle position provides the spank and the quack.

Verdict

Fret-King quality always seems to be improving, and the neck profiles and overall feel and playability are superb. The GG? We loved adding DeArmond-style hi-fi twang to the P90 and Filtertron chime to Townshend power chords, but the phasey electric/acoustic mode issue is a bit frustrating. Still, the electric tones are great; this is one of the best looking, playing and sounding guitars we've seen in a long while. The GW has a less distinct personality but it covers so much ground that it would be an ideal do-it-all choice. Both guitars come with Fret-King carry bags and they offer real value for money.

FINAL SCORE

FRET-KING BLACK LABEL ELISE GG	
Build Quality	19/20
Playability	18/20
Sound	17/20
Value for money	18/20
Vibe	18/20
TOTAL	90%

FINAL SCORE

FRET-KING BLACK LABEL CORONA GW	
Build Quality	18/20
Playability	18/20
Sound	16/20
Value for money	18/20
Vibe	16/20
TOTAL	86%

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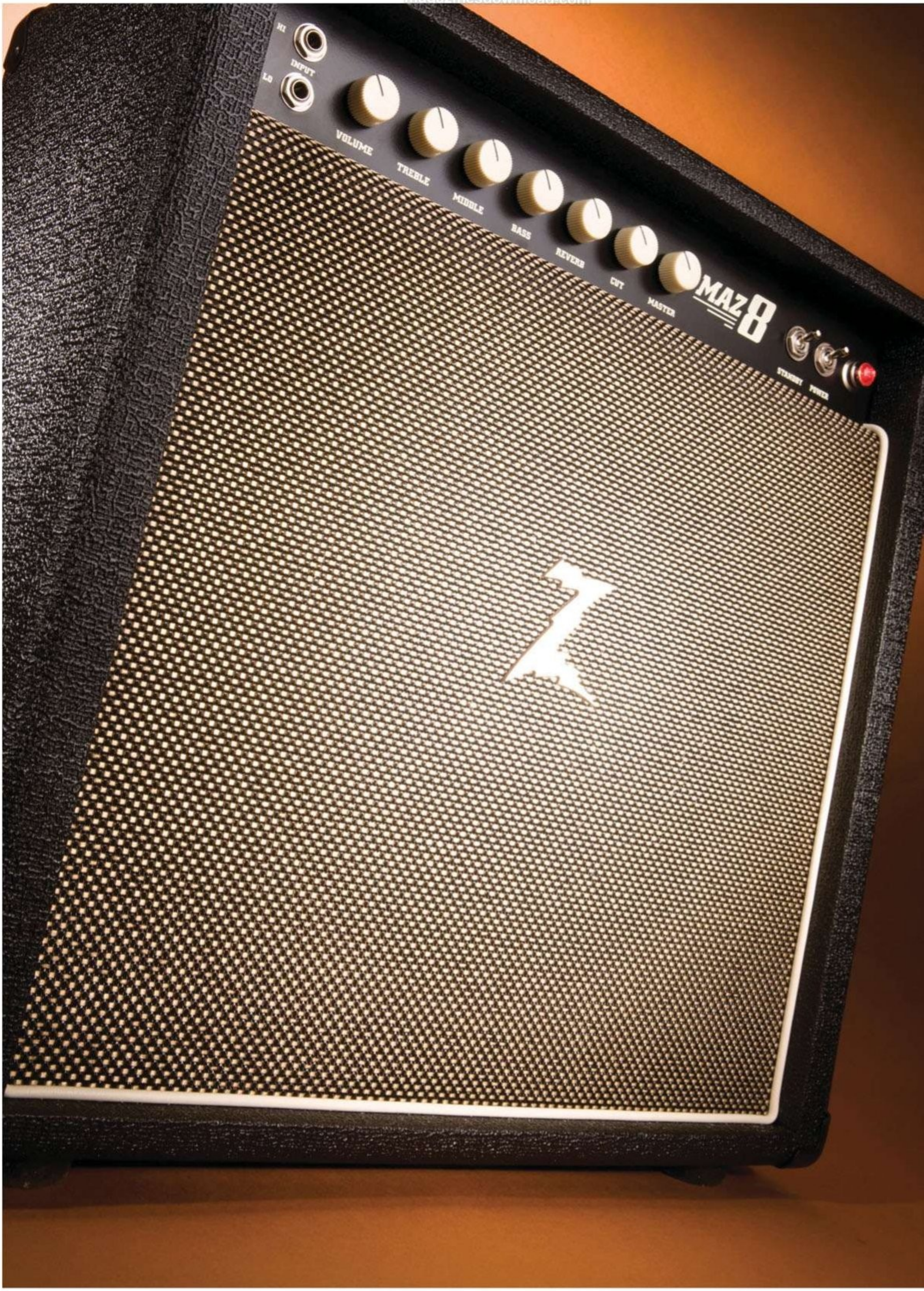

Dr Z

Maz 8 Studio Combo

This hand-wired combo aims to deliver the sound of Dr Z's most popular amp at more civilised volume levels. Is this the answer to the 'all the tone, half the volume' problem? Review by **David Greeves**

The Dr Z name might not be as well known on this side of the pond as those of some of the more celebrated members of the boutique scene, but the Cleveland, Ohio-based outfit has an enviable record of building great amps. A knack for capturing classic sounds and a tone-comes-first attitude to design have made Dr Z amps a permanent fixture with likes of country über-picker Brad Paisley, the Bluesbreakers' Buddy Whittington and rock legends Joe Walsh and John Fogerty.

Dr Z's most popular model is the Maz 18 Jr, a versatile dual-EL84 amp with the uncanny ability to deliver both Fender-like clarity and definition and Vox-esque jangle, bite and break-up. Responding to customer demand, the brand-new Maz 8 claims to offer – you guessed it – the same great tones at lower volume, by taking the preamp from the Maz 18 and putting it in front of a newly-designed single EL84 power amp. Switching from a Class AB push-pull power stage to a Class-A single-ended equivalent has big implications for tone, headroom and overdrive characteristics, so we're interested to see if the Maz 8 can deliver.

We're reviewing the compact 1x12" 'Studio' combo version. The Maz 8 is also available as a head or in the larger 'Standard' 1x12" or 2x10" combo formats, but we think that this space-saving 1x12" is the obvious choice for home and studio use. The cabinet feels very solid and is neatly finished. Indeed, there's quality everywhere you look – as there should be at this price – from the impeccably hand-wired circuit board to the high-quality components and transformers. A Celestion G12H comes as standard, with more costly Alnico Blue available as an option, but this efficient ceramic-magnet driver should help the amp's eight watts translate into plenty of volume and bite.

Volume and master, a well-judged three-band EQ plus a presence cut, and spring reverb

The Maz 8 aims to offer the 18 Jr tones at lower volume by mating the same preamp with a new Class A power stage

On the front panel we're presented with high- and low-gain inputs and controls for Volume, Treble, Middle, Bass, Reverb, Cut and Master Volume. The Cut knob works a bit like a

FACTFILE

Dr Z Maz 8

DESCRIPTION **Single-channel 8W all-valve 1x12" combo with spring reverb, effects loop and footswitchable EQ-bypass/boost. Single-ended EL84 output section with pentode and triode modes, GZ34 rectifier valve, four 12AX7 and one 12AT7 preamp valves. Celestion G12H speaker. Made in USA**
RRP **£1450**

CONTROL PANEL **Hi and Lo inputs. Volume, Treble, Middle, Bass, Reverb, Cut and Master Volume controls. Standby and power switches**
REAR PANEL **Triode/pentode power switch. 4/8/16-ohm speaker output. Effects loop send and return. EQ bypass footswitch input (footswitch included)**

DIMENSIONS **490mm wide, 270mm deep, 495mm high**
WEIGHT **16.8kg/37lbs**
OPTIONS **Black (shown), red or blonde. With Celestion Alnico Blue speaker, £1599. Standalone head version, £1299, 1x12" Standard combo and 2x10" combo available by special order**

CONTACT **Peach Guitars**
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Mercury
Also single-ended, but using an EL34 this time, the Mercury will switch from eight watts right down to 1/10th of a watt
RRP **£1599**

Fuchs
Lucky Seven
This no-nonsense seven-watter can run off a single EL34, 6L6 or 6V6 for a variety of tonal flavours
RRP **£1349**

presence control, progressively letting more very high frequencies through as you turn it up. The reverb comes from a valve-driven spring tank mounted in a pouch on one side of the cabinet.

It's nice to see that, while this might be a lower-powered Maz, Dr Z hasn't cut back on the features. Around the back we find a valve-driven effects loop, an input for the included EQ bypass footswitch, speaker outputs at 4, 8 and 16 ohms and the pentode/triode switch. Flicking the latter to 'triode' lowers the amp's output by cutting out two of the EL84 output valve's grid elements. As well as providing less volume, we'd expect this mode to offer a different set of tonal characteristics too.

A triode/pentode switch, a choice of outputs to suit all cabs and the FX loop are all around the back

Sounds

Traditionally, single-ended amps are all about warm, natural distortion as opposed to clarity and definition, so we're astonished to find all these things on offer from the Maz 8. The low end is so firm and well-defined that we feel like double-checking that there really is just one EL84 glowing softly at the back of the amp. Note articulation is stunning and very reminiscent of the full-size Maz. Every detail of your pick attack is revealed, and the way each note 'blooms', courtesy of the valve rectifier, is positively addictive. Be warned, though: it's just as revealing of sloppy playing and, as with the best amps, the more you put in, the more you get out.

Unlike the many lower-powered amps that are designed for overdrive alone, the clean sounds are really very good, especially when you add some of the delicious spring reverb. In pentode mode, it's easily loud enough for small gigs. Turn up the volume and you'll discover some great bluesy drive tones – fans of Hendrix and SRV will find that this amp simply loves Strats. Crank it further and the Maz 8 delivers some classic rock crunch that just gets richer and more harmonically complex as you turn the master volume past 12 o'clock. The Maz 8 feels a lot like a non-master volume amp in that the overdrive it delivers feels so open and unrestrained, yet cleans up with just small nudge of the guitar's volume control.

Single-ended amps are all about warm, natural distortion, not clarity and definition – but the Maz 8 does it all

Switching to triode mode drops the volume considerably and we suspect that this is where the amp will spend most of its time when played at home. Tonally, things are a little smoother and darker, but just as likely to put a big grin on your face. Meanwhile, hitting the EQ bypass delivers a big boost in volume and gain and a radical change in character. Raw, dirty and with plenty of midrange honk, in triode mode especially it calls to mind an old Fender Champ driven to its limits.

The only gripe we can find is that, in pentode mode, there's a little more background hiss than we'd like, especially when you open up the highly effective Cut control to add bite and sparkle to darker-sounding guitars. By their nature, single-ended amps are generally a bit noisier, and if a little noise when you're not playing is the price of sounding this good when you are, we think most would happily pay it.

The standard speaker is a G12H: an Alnico Blue is available for an added £149

Verdict

Producing great sounds at lower volume is the big challenge facing every amp maker. With the Maz 8, Dr Z has delivered what feels like a real live valve amp, built to operate at levels suiting the home, the studio and the stage. We're seriously impressed by the definition this single-ended amp delivers, and with triode and pentode modes, plus the EQ bypass, it covers an awful lot of ground.

FINAL SCORE

DR Z MAZ 8	
Build Quality	**20**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**18**/20
Value for money	**18**/20
Looks	**18**/20
TOTAL	**92%**

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T-REX

Hobo Drive & Gull Wah

From the Denmark-based FX folks, a clever boost/overdrive pedal and an automotive-inspired three-mode wah. Review by **Richard Purvis**

FACTFILE

Hobo Drive

DESCRIPTION **Overdrive and clean boost pedal. Made in Taiwan**

CONTROLS **Preamp, Master and Tone for overdrive; Boost level and toggle switch for pre- or post-overdrive; separate on/bypass footswitches for each effect**

RRP **£215**

CONTACT **Westside Distribution**
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Did you see *Borgen*? Danish political drama, best thing on telly since *The Wire*, and it's left this reviewer in such a warmly pro-Dane mood that nothing short of an armed conflict over the price of bacon could puncture it. Which is good news for T-Rex, because a cynic could easily get sniffy about these two recent launches – one of them appears to be another blues-friendly overdrive, as if they didn't make a bunch of those already, and the other... well, the other is supposed to look like the dashboard of an old German car. No, it is, really.

But don't worry – there's some interesting stuff going on inside both of these boxes. The Hobo Drive might have a name that evokes the open road of America's great depression, but it has a clean boost that can be placed before or after the overdrive, offering a very modern kind of versatility. The Gull Wah, meanwhile, has three voices and some nifty control features. And yes, its design is a tribute to the Mercedes 300SL, a '50s classic famed for its silver-and-red styling and gullwing doors. We've no idea of the reasoning behind this fusion of music and motoring, but let's hope it sounds good.

Hobo Drive

T-Rex's compact twin-stomper format is a proven formula for getting more sounds per square inch of pedalboard, and the Hobo Drive certainly scores highly for neatness. Close-up the white finish has a slightly sparkly, pearlescent quality that's good enough to lick, and there's plenty of room on the top for four knobs and one toggle switch. Preamp, Master and Tone work on the overdrive part of the circuit in the same way they would on an amplifier, while the booster has its own level control and, crucially, that little pre/post switch. In theory, this should be quite an effective tool: boosting an overdriven signal will simply make it louder, while overdriving a boosted signal will create more gain but see much of the increase in level squished out.

The battery compartment is easily accessed if you have a small flathead screwdriver, or don't mind sacrificing the occasional fingernail, but T-Rex would rather you didn't use this too much anyway – it's marked 'for emergency use only', suggesting a heavy power draw that should lead you in the direction of the nearest 9v adaptor. The pots and switches all work smoothly and the overall feel is fairly boutique, at least until you spot the 'Made in Taiwan' sticker.

Sounds

We'll begin with the overdrive on its own. With the top-left knob around 10 o'clock we get a handsome dose of the fat, throaty, silky-topped grunge that

T-Rex does so well. More drive means more aggression, sustain and body, but even with humbuckers you'll have few mushiness issues as long as you stick to the bridge pickup for chord work. The tone control will add fizz or blunt things down as required, and matching the bypass level (or even giving it a cheeky lift) by tweaking Preamp and Master is no hassle at all. An impressive start.

The booster on its own holds no surprises – it takes your clean sound and makes it bigger, either a little bit or a lot. Now add it to the overdrive in 'post' position, and guess what? It takes your dirty sound and makes it bigger, either a little bit or a lot. As a 'more of the same' secret weapon for solos, it works perfectly. That just leaves the fourth setting, with the booster going pre-overdrive. This time the lift in volume is far less pronounced but you've suddenly got loads more gain on tap. It can get pretty extreme, in fact, although the Hobo doesn't feel entirely stable with both effects running close to full.

Gull Wah

First up let's clarify for any hopeful Pink Floyd fans that this unit – made in China, not Taiwan – has nothing to do with David Gilmour's wah-based 'seagull' effect. It's all about the Merc, right down to the control knobs, although sadly T-Rex didn't get round to fitting a gullwing battery compartment. However gimmicky you might find all this, there's no denying it's a tasty-looking wah. The toggle switch offers three sounds in one – including the dual-filtered 'yoy yoy' option – and the Slope knob allows extra control over the character of the effect. There's also a handy Boost control for solos and a 'Hotspot' button that tightens up the range of the treadle's sweep.

Unusually, the mechanism of this wah uses a magnetic field instead of a potentiometer to translate your foot movements into sound, so you won't have to worry about pot wear. A nice idea... how ironic, then, that both the Boost and Slope pots on our review pedal were as crackly as a long-wave broadcast from the moon.

The Hobo Drive gives the fat, throaty, silky-topped grunge that T-Rex does so well, while the Gull is a killer wah

Sounds

Stamp on the treadle to engage the Gull and you'll quickly notice the wide red LED, presumably a reference to the 300SL's brake lights. Almost as quickly, however, you'll notice that this is a killer wah. The top of the sweep in position 1 is pretty spiky through a clean amp, but if you need something a little softer then simply switch to position 2; and if you need something altogether different then head straight for the 'yoy yoy', an effect that sits somewhere between a standard wah and a Heil Talk Box. It's distinctive and expressive, but fundamentally sweet and not in the least bit wacky.

The Slope control is a brilliant touch, adding body to the midrange at one end of the dial and scooping things out for ultra-transparent rhythm playing at the other. And then there's the Hotspot option, which doesn't change anything tonally but concentrates the main part of the frequency sweep into a shorter range of travel – you may find it makes the pedal easier to use depending on how your ankles work.

Verdict

You can rely on T-Rex for overdrive that's as smooth and beefy as a cow in a smoking jacket. The Hobo Drive is a pedal in the tradition of the Dr Swamp and the Mudhoney, but its real selling point is its genuine offer of four sounds in one small box – overdrive, boost, overdrive into boost and boost into overdrive – which a lot of live players are sure to find handy. The Gull Wah, meanwhile, is simply a great-sounding wah-wah with a lot of flexibility. Until the second series of *Borgen* arrives, these two will do nicely.

FINAL SCORE	
HOBO DRIVE	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**19**/20
Sound	**17**/20
Value for money	**16**/20
Looks	**17**/20
TOTAL	**87%**

FINAL SCORE	
GULL WAH	
Build Quality	**17**/20
Playability	**19**/20
Sound	**18**/20
Value for money	**16**/20
Looks	**18**/20
TOTAL	**88%**

FACTFILE

Gull Wah

DESCRIPTION **Triple-voice wah-wah pedal. Made in China**
CONTROLS **Boost, Slope; toggle-switch for Wah 1, Wah 2 or Yoy Yoy voice; 'Hotspot' push-button**
RRP **£210**

CONTACT **Westside Distribution**
0141 248 4812
www.t-rex-effects.com

Like this? Try this...

Dunlop
Crybaby Multi Wah
Tweakable take on the classic wah, with built-in booster and full control over the depth and shape of the effect
RRP **£209**

Line 6
M5
This multi-FX miracle includes eight wahs, though you'll need the optional expression pedal (£45) to make them work
RRP **£169**

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Harley Benton HBL500BK

Electric guitar

Alder body, set neck, 2x humbucker pickups, trapeze inlays, 3-way toggle switch, 2x volume &, 2x tone controls, 44mm nut width, 63cm scale, 22 frets, gold hardware.

Finish: Black
order code 158824
€ 149.- £ 125.-

Finish: White
order code 255743
€ 149.- £ 125.-

Epiphone Les Paul Standard

Electric guitar

Mahogany & alder body, mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, trapezoid inlays, 2x humbuckers, chrome hardware, tune-o-matic bridge, stopbar tailpiece, 3-way toggle switch, 2x volume controls, 2x tone controls. Finish: Ebony

order code 124838
€ 311.- £ 261.-

Fender Standard Strat 2011 MN

Electric guitar

Made in Mexico, alder body, maple neck (modern C shape), 21 medium frets, scale: 648mm, saddle width: 42mm, 3x standard single-coils, 5-way switch, vintage-style synchronized tremolo, 3-ply parchment pickguard.

Finish: Arctic White
order code 270956

Finish: Black
order code 270949
€ 449.- £ 377.-

Epiphone Les Paul Ultra III

Electric guitar

Chambered mahogany body, set maple neck, rosewood fretboard, ProBucker 2 (neck) and ProBucker 3 (bridge) humbuckers, Shadow NanoMag piezo pickup, new Shadow chromatic tuner built in bridge pickup mounting ring, 2 separate outputs, nickel hardware.

Midnight Sapphire
order code 261053
€ 539.- £ 452.-

Vintage Sunburst
order code 261052
€ 539.- £ 452.-

Gibson SG Special Faded

Electric guitar

Chrome hardware, tune-o-matic bridge, stop tailpiece, mahogany body, mahogany neck, 22 frets, dot inlays, 2x volume & 2 tone controls, 3-way toggle switch, AlNiCo 490R humbucker (neck), AlNiCo 490T humbucker (bridge), includes gig bag.

Finish: Worn Brown
o. code 168315

Finish: Worn Cherry
o. code 153687
€ 598.- £ 502.-

Fender Classic Player Baja Tele

Electric guitar

Classic series, ash body, one-piece soft ‚V' shape maple neck, maple fretboard, 21 medium jumbo frets, chrome hardware, original vintage Tele bridge, 1x custom shop ‚Twisted' Tele® single coil (neck) & 1x Custom Shop Broadcaster single coil (bridge) pickups, tone & volume controls, includes case. Finish: Vintage Blonde

order code 196765
€ 644.- £ 540.-

Gibson Les Paul Studio Limited

Electric guitar

Les Paul model, carved top, mahogany body, set mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 490R/498T AlNiCo humbuckers, tune-o-matic bridge, stopbar tailpiece, chrome hardware, includes original case.

Worn Brown
o. code 198816
€ 645.- £ 541.-

Worn Cherry
order code 225129
€ 645.- £ 541.-

Gibson LP Studio '50 Tribute DB TM

Electric guitar

Exclusive made for Thomann, chambered mahogany body, maple top, dark back, 50s mahogany neck, toasted maple fretboard, 22 frets, scale: 628mm, 2 volume and 2 tone control, 3 way toggle switch, Gibson 490R humbucker (neck), Gibson 498T humbucker (bridge), incl. gigbag. Finish: Satin Ebony.

order code 270874
€ 695.- £ 583.-

Gibson LP Studio 60's Tribute DB

Electric guitar

Chambered mahogany body, 60's slim taper mahogany neck profile, dark back satin, baked maple fretboard, 2 Gibson P-90 single coils, Grover green key tuners, 2 volume and 2 tone controls, chrome hardware, incl. Gibson deluxe gigbag.

Honeyburst
o. code 271698
€ 695.- £ 583.-

Satin Vintage Sunburst
order code 276938
€ 695.- £ 583.-

Gibson Les Paul Studio

Electric guitar

Mahogany body, mahogany neck with 60's neck profile, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, 490R Alnico humbucker (neck), 498T humbucker (bridge), trapezoid inlays, chrome hardware, finish: satin ebony, incl. case.

order code 257355
€ 745.- £ 625.-

Fender HSS TBX Boost Player Strat

Electric guitar

Ash body, maple neck (C shape), rosewood fretboard, 21 frets, 1 Atomic humbucker, 2 vintage noiseless single-coil pickups, 5-way switch, controls for volume, tone and mid boost (25dB), vintage style synchronized tremolo.

Finish: Amber Transparent
order code 276692

Finish: 3-Tone Sunburst
order code 276693
€ 775.- £ 650.-

Gibson SG Standard

Electric guitar

Mahogany body, set mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, 629mm scale, trapezoid inlays, chrome hardware, tune-o-matic bridge, stopbar tailpiece, 2x humbucker pickups, 2x volume & 2x tone controls, 3-way toggle switch, includes case. Finish: Heritage Cherry

order code 122008
€ 990.- £ 831.-

Gibson Explorer '76

Electric guitar

Mahogany body, set mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 496R humbucker (neck) & 500T humbucker (bridge), 22 jumbo frets, white pickguard, chrome hardware, includes case. Finish: Ebony.

order code 104271
€ 1099.- £ 922.-

Gibson Les Paul Studio

Electric guitar

Les Paul model, mahogany body, set mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, 2x humbucker pickups, chrome hardware, incl. case.

Finish: Ebony
o. code 134274
€ 1145.- £ 961.-

Finish: Fireburst
order code 211278
€ 1145.- £ 961.-

Line6 James Tyler JTV-69 Variax

Electric modeling guitar

ST style, alder body, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 22 medium jumbo frets, dot inlays, Graph Tech TUSQ XL nut, stoptail bridge, wounded Alnico humbucker (bridge) and Vintage single-coils (neck and middle), 5-way toggle switch, finish: black, incl. padded gigbag, Line6 Workbench, power supply and Variax Workbench USB adapter.

order code 252063
€ 1245.- £ 1045.-

Gibson Les Paul Studio Pro Plus

Electric guitar

European wide exclusive at Thomann, mahogany body, AA figured maple top, set mahogany neck, 60's Slim taper neck profil, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, 490R and Burstbucker Pro humbucker (both coil split), Grover Kidney tuners, chrome hardware, incl. case.

Red Velvet
o. code 264310
€ 1290.- £ 1082.-

Transl. Black
order code 264311
€ 1290.- £ 1082.-

Fender American Deluxe Strat

Electric guitar

Alder body, maple neck with modern C shape, rosewood fretboard, 22 medium jumbo frets, 3 new noiseless N3 strat single coils, 5-way switch, 1 volume and 2 tone controls, Fender deluxe 2-point synchronized tremolo, 3-ply black pickguard, Fender deluxe locking tuners, finish: tungsten, incl. molded SKB case, cable and strap locks.

order code 244701
€ 1399.- £ 1174.-

Gibson SG '61 Reissue

Electric guitar

Mahogany body, set mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, 629mm scale, trapeze inlays, chrome hardware, tune-o-matic bridge, stopbar tailpiece, 2x ‚57 Classic humbuckers, 2x volume &, 2x tone controls, 3-way toggle switch, includes case. Finish: Heritage Cherry

order code 132373
€ 1439.- £ 1207.-

Gibson Les Paul Traditional

Electric guitar

Mahogany body, carved maple top, set mahogany neck with rounded ‚50s profile, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, 628mm scale, trapeze perloid inlays, '57 Classic (neck) & '57 Classic Plus (bridge) humbucker pickups, TonePro tuners, includes black snakeskin case. Finish: Ebony.

order code 214187
€ 1890.- £ 1586.-

Gibson Les Paul Standard 2008

Electric guitar

Mahogany body, AA grade figured maple top, mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 629mm scale, 43mm nut width, trapezoid inlays, 22 frets, 1x Bursttbucker Pro 2 (bridge) & 1x Bursttbucker Pro 1 (neck), TonePros locking bridge and string holder, Grover locking machine heads, incl. black snakeskin case. Finish: Heritage Cherry Sunburst

order code 214842
€ 2333.- £ 1957.-

Gretsch G6128T-TVP Power Jet

Electric guitar

Arched laminated maple top, semi-hollow one-piece mahogany body, ebony fretboard, 22 frets, 2x TV Jones PowerTron pickups, pinned rosewood based adjust-o-matic bridge, Gretsch Bigsby B3C vibrato tailpiece, chrome hardware, incl. G6238 deluxe hardshell case. Finish: Black.

order code 190926
€ 2399.- £ 2013.-

Gibson ES-335 BE

Semiacoustic guitar

Maple body, birdseye maple top, mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, scale: 629mm, 22 frets, saddle width: 42,8mm, 2 '57 Classic humbuckers, Grover Kidney tuners, tune-o-matic bridge, nickel hardware, finish: natural, incl. case.

order code 267720
€ 2690.- £ 2257.-

Fender David Gilmour NOS

Electric guitar

Custom artist signature model, comfort contoured alder body, maple neck with „Thin Skin" dark tint nitrocellulose lacquer, maple fretboard, 21 vintage frets, CS Fat 50 (neck), CS 69 (mid) and Seymour Duncan SSL5 (bridge) single-coils, 5-way switch, incl. case and certificate of authenticity. Finish: New Old Stock Black.

order code 215713
€ 2969.- £ 2491.-

Gibson Les Paul Custom

Electric guitar

Les Paul model, mahogany body, carved maple top, set mahogany neck, ebony fretboard, mother of pearl block inlays, 22 frets, gold hardware, 490R humbucker (neck), 498T humbucker (bridge), 3-way toggle switch, includes case. Finish: Ebony

order code 147148
€ 2980.- £ 2500.-

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Fender CD-60
Acoustic guitar
Laminated spruce top, back and sides laminated mahogany, nato neck, sonokeling fretboard, scale: 643mm, saddle width: 43mm.

Black
o. code 190654
€ 109.- £ 91.-
Natural
o. code 190655
€ 109.- £ 91.-
Sunburst
o. code 190656
€ 109.- £ 91.-

Harley Benton JC503CEQ
Acoustic guitar
Jumbo style, cutaway, solid spruce top, rosewood back & sides, mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, block inlays, piezo pickup system with 4-band EQ preamp. Finish: Natural High Polish

order code 187498
€ 149.- £ 125.-

Fender CD-60 CE
Acoustic guitar
Dreadnought, cutaway, laminated spruce top, nato back and sides, nato neck, sonokeling fretboard, active Fender FTE3-TN preamp with volume/ bass/mid/treble controls, built-in tuner.

Finish: Black
o. code 190659
€ 175.- £ 147.-
Finish: Natural
o. code 190658
€ 175.- £ 147.-
Finish: Sunburst
order code 190657
€ 175.- £ 147.-

Takamine EG440SC
Acoustic guitar
NEX body with cutaway, solid spruce top, laminated mahogany back and sides, pickup with TP4T preamp system, finish: natural.

order code 198096
€ 311.- £ 261.-

Yamaha APX500II
Acoustic guitar
Cutaway, maple top, nato back and sides, ivory binding, black headstock, nato neck, fretboard rosewood, dot inlays, rosewood bridge, 22 frets, scale: 634mm, saddle width: 43mm, preamp „System 65", piezo pickup, machine heads Yamaha die-cast chrome (TM-29-T), finish: black.

order code 259580
€ 325.- £ 273.-

Fender Jimmy Dale Signature Kingman SCE
Acoustic guitar
Cutaway, solid mahogany top, 'C' shaped maple neck, rosewood fretboard, block inlays, bone nut, scale: 642mm, nut width: 42mm, 20 frets, Fishman Presys pickup system and active on-board preamp with tuner, incl. case. Finish: Natural.

order code 241210
€ 459.- £ 385.-

Martin DCX1E
Acoustic guitar
Cutaway, solid Sitka spruce top, mahogany back & sides, HPL pattern textured finish, Stratabond neck, rosewood fretboard, 20 frets, 645mm scale, 42.8mm saddle width, tortoiseshell pickguard, chrome tuners, Fishman® Classic 4 Sonicore pickup system.

order code 173134
€ 739.- £ 620.-

Martin Guitars D-1 GT
Acoustic guitar
Dreadnought model, solid sitka spruce top, back and sides solid sapele, modified hybrid X scalloped bracing, stratabond neck, rosewood fretboard, 20 frets, scale: 645mm, saddle width: 43mm, incl. case, finish: natural gloss top.

order code 261819
€ 877.- £ 736.-

Takamine EF341SC
Acoustic guitar
Bruce Springsteen model, dreadnought body with cutaway, solid cedar top, maple back and sides, rosewood fretboard, mother of pearl snowflake dots, CT4B preamp with tuner and pickup, finish: black high-gloss, incl. case.

order code 152211
€ 1022.- £ 857.-

Martin D-16GT
Acoustic guitar
Solid Sitka spruce top, solid mahogany back & sides, select hardwood neck, black micarta fretboard and bridge, 20 frets (14 clear), chrome tuners, includes hardshell case. Finish: Natural High Gloss

order code 142158
€ 1085.- £ 910.-

Martin Guitars D-16RGT
Acoustic guitar
Solid spruce top, rosewood back and sides, solid east Indian rosewood bridge and fretboard, 20 frets (14 clear), nut width: 43mm, chrome tuners, incl. hardshell case, high gloss finish.

order code 235615
€ 1179.- £ 989.-

Fender American Kingman USA Select LTD
Acoustic guitar
Limited 150pcs worldwide, solid Engelman spruce top, solid mahogany back and sides, body binding aged white, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, Fishman Sonitone pickup system, finish: sunburst, incl. case, leather strap and certificate of authenticity.

order code 273759
€ 1699.- £ 1425.-

Martin D-28
Acoustic guitar
The classic dreadnought model, solid Sitka spruce top, solid East Indian rosewood back & sides, solid mahogany neck, solid ebony fretboard, 20 frets (14 clear), solid ebony bridge, includes case. Finish: Natural

order code 150353
€ 1955.- £ 1640.-

Takamine TNV460SC
Acoustic guitar
NEX body with cutaway, solid bear claw spruce top, solid Indian rosewood back & sides, ebony fretboard, snowflake inlays, CTP-1 Cool Tube preamp, gold tuners, abalone rosette, includes case. Finish: Natural High Gloss

order code 175766
€ 2066.- £ 1733.-

Gibson Hummingbird
Acoustic guitar
Modern classic, solid Sitka spruce top, solid mahogany back & sides, mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 20 frets, 629mm scale, 43.8mm saddle width, nickel Grover kidney tuners, active electronics with soundhole mounted volume control, includes case. Finish: Heritage Cherry Sunburst

o. code 104450
€ 2390.- £ 2005.-

Maton EBG808
Acoustic guitar
Tommy Emmanuel signature, orchestra model, solid sitka spruce top, back and sides solid queensland maple, queensland maple neck, rosewood fretboard, scale: 650mm, saddle width: 44,1mm, Maton APMic pickup system, finish: natural satin. Made in Australia.

order code 239744
€ 2790.- £ 2341.-

Martin Guitars OMJM John Mayer
Acoustic guitar
John Mayer signature model, 000-45 style, solid Engelmann spruce top, solid indian rosewood back and sides, ebony fretboard, Martin Gold Plus Natural 1 pickup system, incl. 533 Geib style case. Finish: Natural.

order code 109994
€ 2950.- £ 2475.-

Gibson SJ-200 Standard
Acoustic guitar
New edition modern classic, handmade, solid sitka spruce top, back and sides solid eastern curly maple, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, crown inlays, 20 frets, active Aura Ellipse electronics with soundhole-mounted volume control, includes case, finish: vintage sunburst V.O.S.

order code 185825
€ 3090.- £ 2593.-

Martin Guitars J12-40E Special
Acoustic guitar
Jumbo, solid Sitka spruce top, solid East Indian rosewood back & sides, ebony frettboard, 20 frets, solid east indian rosewood headstock with C.F. Martin abalone pearl inlay, modified low oval neck shape, bone nut, solid ebony bridge, gold enclosed tuners, incl. case. Finish: natural high-gloss with aging toner.

order code 248610
€ 3699.- £ 3103.-

Gibson Western Classic Prewar 200
Acoustic guitar
Super jumbo model, AAA-grade sitka spruce top, back and sides AAA-grade Madagascar rosewood, hand-scalloped bracing, fretboard ebony, gold waverly tuners, historic flower pot peghead inlay, finish: vintage Sunburst Nitrocellulose, incl. case.

order code 237840
€ 3980.- £ 3339.-

Ibanez GSRM20-BK
4-string bass guitar
Mahogany body, maple neck, 22 frets, rosewood fretboard, B10 bridge, pickup P/J style, short scale: 726mm (28.6"), finish: black, incl. gigbag and strap.

order code 236793
€ 185.- £ 155.-

Höfner Ignition Beatles Bass
4-string bass guitar
Hollow maple body, spruce top, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, 2x Höfner humbucking pickups, nickel hardware, rhythm/solo-switch, control plate with 2 volume controls.

Vintage Sunburst
order code 232784
Black
order code 232783
€ 244.- £ 205.-
Vintage Sunb./lefthanded
order code 232785
€ 244.- £ 205.-

Fender Squier Frank Bello Jazz Bass
4-string bass guitar
Squier artist series, Frank Bello (Anthrax) signature model, agathis body, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 20 medium frets, 1 split single coil and 1 Jazz Bass pickup. Finish: Black.

order code 112751
€ 299.- £ 251.-

Fender Std. Jazz Bass MN 2011
4-string bass guitar
Made in Mexico, alder body, modern C shape maple neck, maple fretboard, 20 frets, 2 standard J-bass single coils, standard vintage style bridge, scale: 864mm (long scale), saddle width: 38mm. Finish: Black high-gloss.

order code 271345
€ 599.- £ 503.-

Fender Roger Waters Precision
Signature bass guitar
Alder body, bolt-on maple neck, thick „C" shape, 20 medium frets, Seymour Duncan basslines SPB-3 quarter pund single-coil P-bass pickup, chrome/black hardware, machined brass saddle, vintage 70´s fender tuners, black standard 4-saddle bridge, black pickguard, finish: black, incl. deluxe gigbag.

order code 254767
€ 679.- £ 570.-

Fender '50s Precision Bass
4-string bass guitar
Classic series, alder body, 1-piece maple neck with C-shape, 20 vintage style frets, 1 Precision bass split single-coil, American Vintage Precision bass bridge, vintage style reverse tuners, nickel/chrome hardware, gold anodized aluminium pickguard, scale 864mm (34"), incl. deluxe gigbag. Finish: 2-Tone Sunburst.

order code 185299
€ 755.- £ 633.-

Fender '70s Classic Jazz Bass
4-string bass guitar
Classic series, alder body, maple neck with '70s C shape, rosewood frettboard, 20 vintage style frets, scale: 864mm (34"), saddle width: 38mm (1.50"), 2 vintage style Jazz Bass single-coils with AlNiCo magnets, incl. deluxe gigbag, finish: 3-tone sunburst.

order code 212976
€ 775.- £ 650.-

Steinberger Guitars Synapse XS-15FPA Custom
5-string headless bass guitar
Flamed maple body, set CybroSonic graphite neck, phenolic frettboard, 24 frets, scale: 34", 2x EMG-40-P5 active pickups, volume control, mag/piezo PU blend, active hi and lo cut/boost, finish: translucent amber, incl. gigbag.

order code 258933
€ 821.- £ 689.-

Gibson Les Paul Oversized Bass
4-string bass guitar
Mahogany body, maple top, mahogany neck, rosewood frettboard, scale: 864mm, 2 TB+ ceramic pickups, Grover bass tuners, 2 volume and 2 tone controls, chrome hardware, incl. Gibson hardshell case.

Gold Top
o. code 264350
€ 1290.- £ 1082.-
H. Cherry Sunburst
order code 264351
€ 1390.- £ 1166.-

Sandberg California TM4
4-string bass guitar
Ash body, maple neck, rosewood frettboard with block inlays, chrome hardware, pearl white pickguard, 1 Delano J-Style pickup and 1 power humbucker, Sandberg 2-band EQ, active/passive switchable, finish: satin blueburst, incl. gigbag.

order code 221894
€ 1350.- £ 1133.-

Fender American Deluxe J-Bass V
5-string bass guitar
Ash body, modern C-shape maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 21 frets, 2x new N3 noiseless pickups, volume, pan pot, treble boost/cut, midrange boost/cut, bass boost/cut, active/passive mini toggle switch, 3-ply black pickguard, Fender light weight vintage style tuners, finish: wine transparent, incl. SKB molded case, cable, strap and strap locks.

order code 246573
€ 1690.- £ 1418.-

Music Man Stingray 4
4-string bass guitar
Ash body, bolt-on maple neck, 1x Music Man pickup, electronics with 3-band EQ, black pickguard, includes case. Finish: Natural.

order code 181495
€ 1933.- £ 1622.-

Music Man Stingray 5
5-string bass guitar
Ash body, bolt-on maple neck, 3-band EQ, single and dummy coil pickups, serial/ parallel pickup configurations, includes case. Finish: Black.

order code 103886
€ 1999.- £ 1677.-

Rickenbacker 4003 JG
4-string bass guitar
Maple body, neck-through-body maple neck with rosewood frettboard, triangle fret inlays, scale: 845mm (33 1/4"), 2 single-coils, Schaller Deluxe machine heads, 2 outputs (mono and stereo), includes case, finish: Jetglo (black).

order code 150711
€ 2222.- £ 1864.-

Sadowsky MV4-WL Will Lee
4-string bass guitar
Ash body, maple neck, maple frettboard, 22 frets, chrome hardware, D'tuner, Sadowsky J-style pickups, Sadowsky preamp with vintage tone control and midboost, incl. case, finish: black.

order code 257554
€ 2890.- £ 2425.-

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156200	010 - 046	£ 2.79

GHS Boomers

104584	009 - 042	£ 3.94
104585	010 - 046	£ 3.94
158969	011 - 050	£ 3.57
181291	012 - 052	£ 3.94

Dean Markley

104563	2502B 009 - 042	£ 3.19
104562	2508 009 - 046	£ 3.19
104565	2503B 010 - 046	£ 3.19
104564	2504B 010 - 052	£ 3.19

D´Addario EXL

104554	120 009 - 042	£ 3.73
101428	125 009 - 046	£ 3.48
104555	110 010 - 046	£ 3.73
131962	140 010 - 052	£ 4.18

Ernie Ball

104572	2223 009 - 042	£ 4.45
104570	2222 009 - 046	£ 4.45
104573	2221 010 - 046	£ 4.45

Elixir Nanoweb

152173	009 - 042	£ 9.20
152174	009 - 046	£ 9.20
152175	010 - 046	£ 8.80
152177	011 - 049	£ 9.10

Electric bass strings

156186	Warwick Red Label 040 - 100	£ 8.30
144460	Warwick Red Label 045 - 105	£ 8.30
147931	Warwick Red Label 040 - 130	£ 10.-
157147	Warwick Red Label 045 - 135	£ 11.20
140180	GHS 3045 M 045 - 105	£ 15.40
160651	GHS 3045 5M-DYB 045 - 130	£ 18.50
104535	Rotosound 045 - 105	£ 15.40
142786	Rotosound 045 - 130	£ 18.20
122057	Ernie Ball 045 - 100	£ 20.-
141174	Ernie Ball 045 - 105	£ 20.-
121135	Ernie Ball 045 - 130	£ 24.-
152178	Elixir Nanoweb 040 - 095	£ 35.-
171440	Elixir Nanoweb 045 - 100	£ 35.-
152179	Elixir Nanoweb 045 - 105	£ 35.-

GUITAR CARE

Thomann string winder
For faster string winding
order code 122787 — £ 1.21

Harley Benton Guitar Care
Guitar cleaner, 100ml, even for nitro lacquers
order code 196948 — £ 3.10

Dunlop Formula 65 Polish
Polish & cleaner for guitar and bass.
order code 141577 — £ 4.00

D'Andrea Lemon Oil
Cleaning oil, fretboard conditioner for guitar and bass
order code 150545 — £ 3.16

GHS Fast Fret
Fingerboard, string and neck cleaner, silicone free.
order code 104761 — £ 4.03

Lead Foot SB201
A/B switch for guitar and bass
order code 134241 — £ 15.40

GIGBAG & CASE

Thomann Economy
Standard model, large pocket for accessories, notes and strings, colour: black

145669	Classic	£ 8.-
178496	Western	£ 8.-
133671	Electric guitar	£ 8.-
142774	Electric bass	£ 8.-

Thomann Standard
20mm padding, bottom protector, black velvet lining, backbag straps.

121546	Classic	£ 14.50
130405	3/4 Classic	£ 14.50
121547	Western	£ 14.50
121548	Electric guitar	£ 14.50
157096	Flying V	£ 14.50
121549	Electric bass	£ 14.50
142783	Jumbo	£ 23.-
121814	Acoustic bass	£ 24.-

Thomann Deluxe Profi
Gig bags with 30mm padding, 5cm wide padded straps, foldable backbag straps, 2 outside pockets, 2 additional accessory pockets.

142777	Electric guitar	£ 19.20
142775	Classic	£ 19.20
142776	Western	£ 19.20
142778	Electric bass	£ 19.20

Fender Frontman 15R
Electric guitar combo
15W, 1x 8" special design speaker, dual selectable channels, volume, gain, drive, 3 band EQ, headphone output. Dimensions: 31.8 x 33.6 x 18.4cm (HxWxD). Weight: 6.8kg
order code 155460 — € 69.- £ 58.-

Marshall MG30CFX
Guitar combo
30W, 1x 10" speaker, 4 channels (storable presets) with 3-band EQ, digital effects, digital reverb, headphone output, MP3/line in, dimensions: WHD 48 x 42 x 22,5cm, weight: 10,8kg, finish: carbon kevlar.
o. code 270799 — € 159.- £ 133.-

Marshall MG15CF
15W, 1x 8", 2 channels.
order code 270764 — € 85.- £ 71.-

Roland Cube-40XL
Electric guitar combo with amp modeling
40W, 10" custom speaker, 2 channels (+ 2 storable settings), 10 amp models, 8 effects, solo function, 3-band EQ, 80 sec. looper with endless overdubs, power squeezer, aux in, manual and chromatic tuner, 6 footswitch connections.
order code 254100 — € 218.- £ 183.-

Roland Cube-20XL
20", 8", 6 amp models
order code 254102 — € 158.- £ 133.-

Fender FM212R
Guitar combo
Frontman series, 100W, 2x 12" speakers, 3 channels (normal, drive and extra drive), FX loop, includes 2-way footswitch. Dimensions: 49.5 x 68.5 x 27cm. Weight: 21.7kg
order code 167017 — € 219.- £ 184.-

Bugera V22
All valve combo
22W, 12" speaker, 2 channels, 3x 12AX7 preamp valves, 2x EL 84 power amp valves, clean, gain and volume control, 3-band EQ, 1x master control, 1x presence control, built-in digital reverb (adjustable), normal and bright input, impedance switchable between 4, 8 and 16Ω, triode and pentode mode, 2x external speaker outputs, footswitch input, effect loop, incl. footswitch.
order code 252074 — € 255.- £ 214.-

Fender Mustang III
Electric guitar combo
100W, 1x12" Celestion G12T-100 speaker, 8Ω, 1 channel with 100 presets, data wheel, softkeys for amp select, stomp edit, modulation edit, delay edit, reverb edit, utility, save, exit and tap/tuner, 11 modulation, 9 delay and 10 reverb effects, headphone output, speaker emulated USB output, weight: 16,3kg, incl. Ableton Live Lite 8 Fender Edition and IK Multimedia, incl. 2-button footswitch.
order code 258891 — € 259.- £ 217.-

Bugera 6260-212
All valve guitar combo
120W, 2 channels, 2x 12" Bugera speaker, 4x 6L6 power valves (convertible to EL34), 5x 12AX7 preamp valves, reverb and presence control for each channel, impedance switch (4/8/16Ω), includes footswitch for channel and reverb. Dimensions: 51.9 x 68.8 x 24.8cm. Weight: 28.5kg.
order code 206768 — € 285.- £ 239.-

Line 6 Spider IV 75-112
Modeling guitar combo
75W, 1x12" speaker, 16 amp models, 64 programmable presets (with FBV shortboard), 400 presets (200 song-based, 200 from famous artists), LC display, FX processor with 6 different effects (4 simultaneous), built-in tuner, headphone/DI out with speaker simulation, CD/mp3 in (mini-jack), dimensions DWH: 26,4 x 50,5 x 45,7cm, weight: 15.5kg.
order code 231416 — € 289.- £ 242.-

Yamaha THR10
Universal guitar combo w/ USB interface
For electric guitar, acoustic guitar or bass guitars, 5 amp simulations, bass and acoustic simulation, 3-band EQ, 5 user memories, chromatic tuner, headphone out, aux in, USB to use as interface, 2x 8cm fullrange speaker, 2x 5W, incl. power supply, USB cable, cable and Cubase AI, dimensions WHD: 36 x 18.4 x 14cm, weight: 2.8kg.
order code 271803 — € 295.- £ 248.-

Bugera 6262-212
All valve guitar combo
120W, 2x 12" Bugera speakers, 2 channels, 4x 6L6 power amp valves (convertible to EL34), 6x 12AX7 preamp tubes, reverb and presence controls per channel, impedance switch (4, 8 and 16Ω), includes reverb/channel footswitch. Dimensions: 51.8 x 68.8 x 24.8cm. Weight: 28.5kg.
order code 206034 — € 322.- £ 270.-

Vox AC30 C2
30W all-valve guitar combo
2x 12" Vox GSH12-30 speakers, 2 ins (boost & normal), input link-switch to combine both channels, volume, brilliance switch, boost volume, treble, EQ, standard/custom switch, bass, reverb, tremolo, tone cut, master volume, standby and power switch, outs for external speakers, output bias, FX loop, includes footswitch. Weight: 32kg
order code 180600 — € 858.- £ 720.-

Mesa Boogie Mark V 112 BK
Electric guitar combo
All valve, 1x12" C90 speaker, 3 channels, 5-band master EQ. Dimensions: 81 x 64 x 43.5cm (WxHxD). Weight: 37kg. Finish: Black
order code 224040 — € 2699.- £ 2264.-

Bugera 333 Infinium
All-valve electric guitar head
120W, 3 channels, 4x 6L6 poweramp valves, 4x 12AX7 preamp valves, 3-band EQ, poweramp damping, FX loop, switchable impedance (4, 8 and 16Ω), integrated reverb, valves no longer need to be matched in pairs, different types of valves can be combined in the preamp stage of any valve amplifier, incl. foot switch.
order code 269560 — € 425.- £ 357.-

Engl E315 Gig Master 15 Head
Guitar tube head
15W, 2 channels, 3-band EQ, mid boost switch, preamp ECC83S and poweramp 2x EL84, effect loop, balanced line out (6,3mm jack) with speaker simulation, built-in power soak (full power - 5W - 1W - zero), speaker outs for 8 and 16Ω, dimensions WHD: 42.5 x 20 x 22.5cm, weight: 8,9kg.
order code 246407 — € 499.- £ 419.-

Engl Fireball 100
All-valve guitar head
100W, 2 channels, controls for clean gain, lead gain, bass, middle, treble, lead volume, master A, master B and presence, switches for bright, bottom and mid boost, channel select, adjustable noise gate, switchable effects loop, "Tube Monitor" system, 4x ECC83 and 4x 6L6GC valves. Weight: 22kg (approx).
order code 227053 — € 1258.- £ 1055.-

Kemper Profiling Amplifier
Guitar preamp
Allows you to take a precise sound snapshot of an existing amplifier setup including speaker cabinet and microphones, multiple stomp effect emulations (up to 4 simultaneously), master effects, EQ, and more, it is now possible for the first time to take a precise snapshot of your own amplifier sound.
order code 264341 — € 1399.- £ 1174.-

Gallien Krueger Backline 115 II
Bass combo
175W, 1x 15" speaker, 4-band EQ, 10dB pad, mute switch, gain & level controls, contour control, line output, headphone output
order code 156650 — € 249.- £ 209.-

Ashdown T15-250S
Bass combo
Thomann Special Edition, 1x 15" speaker, 250W, hi/low input. Controls: bass, lo mid, middle, hi mid, treble, deep and bright. FX loop, DI out, tuner out.
order code 227816 — € 285.- £ 239.-

Ampeg BA300/115
300W hybrid bass combo
1x15" speaker, HF horn with level control, 1x 12AX7 preamp valve, 3-band EQ, ultra high/low switches, integrated compressor, tube-driven line out (XLR/unbalanced jack) with level control, pre/post switch and ground lift, removable castors. Dimensions: 54 x 55 x 40.64cm. Weight: 27.5kg.
order code 119236 — € 477.- £ 400.-

tc electronic BG500/210
Transistor bass combo
500W (1000W Peak), 2x 10" + 1" Eminence TC custom drivers, SpectraComp, TubeTone, tweeter tone, 3 channel memories, bass tuner, instant EQ, balanced DI output, headphone output, dimensions WHD: 47,5 x 73,5 x 41cm, weight: 32kg.
order code 246076 — € 485.- £ 407.-

Ampeg BA300/210
300W hybrid bass combo
2x10" speaker, HF horn with level control, 12AX7 preamp tube, 3-band EQ, mid control style, ultra high/low switches, built-in compressor, pre/post switch and ground lift, removable casters, dimensions WHD: 53.98 x 54.61 x 40.64.cm, weight: 25.kg.
order code 206084 — € 522.- £ 438.-

Ashdown MAG 300H Bundle
Bass half stack
MAG300H bass head - 300W @ 4Ω, active and passive ins, VU meter. Controls: bass, low mid, mid, hi mid, treble, bright and deep switches. Post EQ balanced DI line/tuner out. Weight: 8.5kg. **MAG410T** bass cab - 4x 10" + tweeter, 350W @ 8Ω, 60Hz-20kHz. Weight: 28kg. **Includes speaker cable.**
order code 112500 — € 569.- £ 477.-

Ampeg BA600/115
600W hybrid bass combo
2x 12AX7 valve preamp, 600W, 1x 15" neodymium speakers, HF horn with level control, channel switching (vintage B15/modern), 3-band EQ, ultra hi/lo switches, compressor, line out, tube-driven bal. XLR and unbal. 1/4" out with level control, pre/post EQ switch and ground lift, FX loop. Weight: 27.5kg.
order code 206085 — € 619.- £ 519.-

Ampeg BA600/210
600W hybrid bass combo
2x 12AX7 valve preamp, 600W, 2x 10" neodymium speakers, HF horn with level control, channel switching (vintage B15/modern), 3-band EQ, ultra hi/lo switches, integrated compressor, line out, tube-driven balanced XLR and unbalanced 1/4" out with level control, pre/post EQ switch and ground lift, FX loop. Dimensions: 66 x 69 x 43cm. Weight: 27.5kg.
order code 202312 — € 619.- £ 519.-

Kustom DE300 HD
Hybrid bass head
Tube preamp with 12AX7 valve, 300W RMS @ 4Ω, controls for bass, mids and treble, room EQ, organic clipping, preamp out, power amp in, DI output XLR, dimensions WHD: 58,4 x 26,7 x 29,2cm, weight: 16,3kg, designed in USA.
order code 229074 — € 259.- £ 217.-

Gallien Krueger Backline 600
300W bass head
4Ω, active 4-band EQ, contour control, boost (tube effect), FX loop, tuner out, XLR out with ground & pre/post switch, 2 speaker outs (jack). Dimensions: 19"/2U. Weight: 5.9kg
order code 177955 — € 299.- £ 251.-

Gallien Krueger MB500
Bass head
500W @ 4Ω, 350W @ 8Ω, active 4-band EQ, separate boost channel with dedicated volume control, contour control, digital power supply and power amp, DI out with pre/post switch and ground lift, 2 Speakon outs, headphone/line out, FX loop, tuner out, mute switch. Dimensions: 28 x 4.5 x 19.5cm. Weight: 1.36kg.
order code 204688 — € 499.- £ 419.-

Gallien Krueger 1001RB-II
Bass head
700W @ 4Ω, 460W @ 8Ω LF low & 50W high, 4/5-string preset, contour and presence controls, 4-band EQ, XLR DI out with ground lift and pre/post switch, FX loop, tuner out, mute switch. Dimensions: 19"/2U
order code 146973 — € 755.- £ 633.-

Gallien Krueger GT700RB-IV
480W + 75W @ 4Ω.
order code 145612 — € 589.- £ 494.-

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- 30-day money back guarantee
- free shipping to the UK and Ireland on orders above £159

the t.bone TWS16 GT
16-channel UHF wireless system
9.5" diversity receiver, GT guitar plug-on transmitter, 16 switchable frequencies (863.125 - 864.875MHz), 2 parallel systems, switchable squelch, XLR & jack out, external power supply, DC out for recharging transmitter. Includes 9.5" rackmount, 1m XLR-jack output cable.

order code 231529 — € 107.- £ 90.-

Sennheiser Freeport Instrument
Diversity UHF wireless system
4 switchable frequencies between 863 - 865MHz, 10mW HF power, diversity receiver with LED for HF, diversity, peak, XLR & jack out, guitar bodypack with 1x 9V battery (up to 10hr). Includes 12V power supply and guitar cable.

order code 183507 — € 158.- £ 133.-

Shure PG14E T10
UHF guitar/bass wireless system
PG1 handheld transmitter, 10 frequencies switchable (4 parallel), T10 frequency range (854-865MHz), pilot tone, mic/line switchable, 10mW HF power, 9.5" diversity receiver with internal antennas, audio and ready LEDs on receiver, channel display, XLR/jack out, powered via 9V battery. Includes WA302 guitar cable and power supply.

order code 109421 — € 188.- £ 158.-

Line 6 Relay G50
Guitar & bass guitar wireless system
2.4GHz, 12 switchable frequencies, frequency response: 10Hz - 20kHz, 120dB max. SPL, up to 60m working distance, jack I/O, battery powered up to 8h, LED signal for status and battery health, switchable EQ presets to simulate different guitar cables, small and trendy housing, incl. batteries, cable and manual.

o. code 241990 — € 399.- £ 335.-

Line 6 Relay G90 19" True Diversity Receiver, 2 outs for amp/tuner. € 635.- £ 533.-
order code 241999

Korg AW-2G
Chromatic clip-on tuner
Ultra-compact, ultra-lightweight, attaches to your wind or string instrument for easy and accurate tuning, piezo pickup detects vibrations directly from the instrument, integrated microphone, adjustable calibration (410 - 480Hz), tuning from A0 (27.5Hz) to C8 (4186Hz).

o. code 222775 — € 27.- £ 23.-

Korg Pitchblack
Chromatic floor pedal tuner
LED display, 100% true bypass out, 4 display modes (full strobe, half strobe, meter & mirror), detection range from E0 to C8 (20,60Hz - 4186Hz), adjustable calibration (436 - 445Hz), 9V DC output jack for cascading the power supply to other pedals, black aluminium die-cast body, optional power supply available.

order code 207261 — € 63.- £ 53.-

tc electronic PolyTune mini
Polyphonic stompbox tuner
Reference pitch: 440Hz, tuning range: 27.5Hz - 4186Hz, ±0.5 cent tuning accuracy, true bypass, super-bright LED display, Drop-D and capo tuning, up to 5 semitones flat tunings, dimensions WDH: 5.1 x 9.3 x 4.5cm, weight: 160g.

o. code 274540 — € 77.- £ 65.-

Boss TU-3
Chromatic floor tuner
Cent mode (like classical tuner) or stream mode, Accu Pitch, high brightness mode, flat tunings, mute or bypass, C0 (16,35Hz) - C8 (4.186Hz), also for 7-string guitars and 6-string basses, ±1 Cent, calibration 436 - 445 Hz, powered by 9V battery (included) or optional power supply, power for up to 7 additional FX pedals. Dimensions: 7.3 x 5.9 x 12.9cm. Weight: 390g.

order code 238909 — € 88.- £ 74.-

Electro Harmonix Big Muff PI USA Classic
Distortion/sustainer
True bypass, long creamy sustain, fat fuzz sound, solid treble and transparent bass sound à la Jimi Hendrix, Santana and Pink Floyd, power supply not included, made in USA.

order code 147853 — € 63.- £ 53.-

Electro Harmonix Little Big Muff
Same silky smooth violin-like sustain and creamy tone.
order code 191809 — € 55.- £ 46.-

Behringer FCB1010
MIDI foot controller with MIDI merge
10 banks with 10 presets each, special presets for Behringer amps, 2 expression pedals, simultaneous transmission of 5 MIDI program changes and 2 MIDI controllers per preset, MIDI note-on commands for trigger & tap tempo applications, 2 program relay control switch jack outputs (e.g. to select channels on any guitar amp), built-in power supply. Weight: 3.5kg

order code 149820 — € 109.- £ 91.-

Harley Benton PB1000
Pedal board
For floor effects with aluminum case, velcro mounting area, incl. velcro tape and mounting material for optional power supply under the board, metal handle, chrome corners, dimensions: 60 x 40 x 11cm, weight (without case): 4,6kg.

order code 258092 — € 122.- £ 102.-

tc electronic Flashback
Delay/looper stompbox
Mono/stereo I/O, delay, feedback and FX-level control, 10 different delay settings, audio tapping, USB connection for exchanging TonePrint settings and software updates, true bypass, power supply or battery (both not included).

order code 259463 — € 145.- £ 122.-

Boss ME-25 Bundle
Guitar FX pedal
24bit, 60 presets, OD/DS solo function, easy edit function, 5 real time controller, ME-25 DVD-ROM, to use with included 6 AA batteries or optional power supply, weight: 1,9kg, dimensions WDH: 30 x 19,1 x 7,2cm. Bundle incl. the sssnake GKP6 cable.

order code 253474 — € 158.- £ 133.-

Voodoo Lab Pedal Power 2 Plus
Universal power supply
For all battery operated guitar pedals, 4x 9/12V/100mA, 2x 9V/250mA, 2x 9V/100mA or combination of several outputs for 18V or 24V, each output is complete isolated & short circuit protected, regulated and highly filtered, incl. cables and detachable AC power cable.

order code 205981 — € 159.- £ 133.-

Boss DD-7
Digital delay
6.4sec delay time, 40sec loop function, modulation echo with chorus, modeling of the classic DM-2, tap tempo via optional footswitch or continuous adjustment via optional expression pedal, stereo in/out, power supply optional.

order code 207482 — € 168.- £ 141.-

Zoom G3
FX unit & guitar audio interface
3 big LCD displays and footswitches, authentic modeling for amps, cabinets and microphones, more than 100 DSP effects, up to 100 presets, drum computer, tuner, looper function with 40 sec. phrase recording and overdubbing, USB audio interface (USB powered and compliant to Mac and PC), incl. edit & share, Sequel LE and power supply.

order code 263002 — € 169.- £ 142.-

Digitech JamMan Solo
Looper/phrase sampler
Store over 35 minutes of mono CD quality loops in 99 internal memories, optional SDHC card can store over 16 hours (with optional 8GB or higher SDHC memory card), 44.1kHz sampling rate (CD quality), USB, aux input, incl. power supply.

order code 243155 — € 175.- £ 147.-

Boss RC-3
Loop station
Massive internal memory with up to three hours of stereo recording time, 99 on-board memories for storing loops, USB 2.0 port allows you to connect to a PC and import/export WAV audio, rhythm guide with real drums, runs on a single 9V battery (included) or optional AC power supply (order code 108096).

order code 259315 — € 198.- £ 166.-

Digitech JamMan Stereo
Looper / phrase sampler
Store over 35 minutes of mono, CD quality loops in 99 internal memories, SD card slot, 44.1kHz sample rate, USB port, record rhythm loops and solo over them on the fly, completely hands-free, aux in, reverse playback, 4 heavy-duty metal footswitches, 3 stop modes, balanced XLR mic in, metronome, automatic recording, includes power supply.

o. code 243160 — € 244.- £ 205.-

Vox ToneLab EX
Guitar preamp
Original Vox ValveReactor™ with 12AX7 valve, 200 professional created programs, 100 user programs, 100 factory presets, incl. 50 song presets, 33 amp models, 11 cabinet models, 45 premium effects, 11 distortion pedals, 15 floorpedal effects, 11 modulation effects, 4 delay effect types, 3 reverb types, 1 noise reduction, dimensions: WHD: 39,4 x 23,8 x 7,2cm, weight: 3kg, incl. power supply.

order code 257611 — € 266.- £ 223.-

Boss ME-70
Multi FX pedal & preamp
Manual mode, memory mode, 18 banks of 4 patches, preamp with 6 amp models, 4 effect groups with on/off footswitch, 40sec looper, expression pedal with 6 functions, reverb, noise supressor, tuner, aux in, powered via battery or optional 9V power supply.

order code 222795 — € 277.- £ 232.-

Boss RC-30 PowerSet
Dual track looper
Twin pedal multitrack looper with true stereo I/O, 2 synchronized stereo tracks, massive internal memory with up to three hours of stereo recording time, 99 on-board memory phrases for storing loops, built-in effects for processing loops, USB 2.0, rhythm guide with real drums, runs on batteries or optional AC power supply. Bundle incl. Boss (Roland) PSA 230S power supply.

order code 259329 — € 318.- £ 267.-

Boss JS-8 eBand
Audio interface, preamp und recorder
39 amp models for guitar and bass, audio player with 4000 songs, mic input with 4 modeling effects, 300 audio loop phrases on-board for backing tracks and rhythms, 40 sec. looper with overdubs, 24bit/44,1kHz, incl. power supply, SD card, dimensions WDH: 26,4 x 16,6 x 20,1cm, weight: 1,7kg.

order code 235701 — € 318.- £ 267.-

Boss GT-10 bundle
Guitar FX processor and preamp
400 presets (200 factory, 200 user), 13 simultaneous FX blocks, 2 WSP chips, SB Audio MIDI interface, 2 freely assignable control footswitches, amp switch connector, FX loop, Boss 40sec looper. Dimensions: 54.2 x 27.2 x 7.7cm (WxDxH). Weight: 4.7kg. Bundle includes Thomann FX pedal bag.

order code 210357 — € 468.- £ 393.-

Boss RC-300
Loop station
3 stereo tracks each with 2 separate foot switches, volume fader for each track, expression pedal for effect control in real time, 3 hours stereo recording time and 99 internal user presets, 16 optimized effects, XLR mic in with phantom power, USB connection for import & export of WAV data files, dimensions WxDxH: 53.6 x 23.1 x 7.6cm, weight: 3.9kg, incl. power supply.

order code 270951 — € 468.- £ 393.-

Line6 POD HD500 Bundle
Guitar FX
16 amp, 16 cabinet and 100 effect models, 48sec. looper, pitch shifter, effects pre/post switchable, effect loop, aux in, XLR mic in, CD/MP3 in, Variax and USB (10 audio channels), headphone out, 128 user programs and 512 factory presets, MIDI in/out/thru, dimensions WHD: 55 x 8 x 27cm. Bundle incl. Thomann gigbag.

order code 254915 — € 489.- £ 410.-

Roland GR-55GK
Guitar synth + modeling
910 editable Roland synthesizer sounds, complete modeling-soundchain (guitar/bass/synth/effects/amps) out of VG-99 incl. virtual tuning, 2 synth sounds and the modeling sound can be combined, 270 preset sounds, 297 storage spaces, 20-second looper with endless overdubbing, USB interface for audio and MIDI, incl. power supply, GK-3 pickup and 5m GK cable, weight: 3.3kg.

order code 259311 — € 745.- £ 625.-

Avid Eleven Rack + Pro Tools 10
Guitar recording and effect system
True-Z auto-impedance guitar input, classic amp and stompbox sounds, effects processors in studio-quality, convolution based microphone emulations, integrated FX-loop, Tuner, tempo tap, USB 2.0, supports up to 8 simultaneous channels of high-resolution recording (up to 24bit/96kHz), AES/EBU and S/PDIF digital I/O, MIDI I/O, incl. ProTools 10 (download version) and iLok.

order code 272823 — € 759.- £ 637.-

PICKS

Dunlop
Nylon picks
149397 Thin
149398 Medium
149399 Heavy — £ 0.33

Harley Benton
Professional perloid picks
149393 Thin
149394 Medium
149395 Heavy
149396 Extra Heavy — £ 0.20

Pick Holder
Plastic pick holder, up to 5 picks, can be mounted to a mic stand.
order code 121815 — £ 4.00

Dunlop Pick Holder
with double-sided tape
order code 133206 — £ 1.55

Wedgie Pick Holder
for head stock, can be clipped between 2 strings, for 2 picks
order code 162773 — £ 1.59

ACCESSORIES

the sssnake cables

128549	IPP1030, 3m	£ 2.01
128550	IPP1060, 6m	£ 2.81
157995	GPK3, 3m	£ 4.03
157996	GPK6, 6m	£ 5.50
158874	GPK9, 9m	£ 7.20
166775	textile coated cable, 6m	£ 6.40
163864	WPP1060, 4m, helix cable	£ 5.50

Cordial cables

104967	Cordial CTI3PP, 3m	£ 8.80
104968	Cordial CTI6PP, 6m	£ 10.80
104969	Cordial CTI9PP, 9m	£ 12.80

Harley Benton GTI
Electronic tuning tone, with a push of a button all 6 guitar notes (E, A, D, G, H, E) via built-in speaker, practical key ring format
order code 159508 — £ 2.32

Thomann CTK-10
Chromatic tuner as keyring, tuning by built-in microphone, pitch range: 440 Hz, detection accuracy: +-0,5 cent, incl. battery
order code 228420 — £ 3.16

Thomann power supply
9V DC, 300mA, for Ibanez, Boss or Behringer floor effects.
order code 108096 — £ 8.-

Pickups

122806	Seymour Duncan SH-4 black	£ 85.-
180924	Seymour Duncan SSH-JB	£ 105.-
242760	Seymour Duncan SAPH-2S	£ 155.-
121456	EMG 81 BK	£ 80.-
152101	EMG 85 BK	£ 85.-
136665	EMG 60 BK	£ 80.-
154102	EMG Zakk Wylde Pro	£ 121.-
146139	EMG DG-20 David Gilmour	£ 231.-
150688	Gibson P-57 Classic Vintage GC	£ 71.-
170786	Kinman FV-HMS Hank Marvin	£ 258.-

HB-H by Shadow
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MARTIN
000-15SM Acoustic & DC-15ME Electro

Stripped-down but great-sounding, Martin's 15 Series is real mahogany once again and features two new models. Review by **Jerry Uwins**

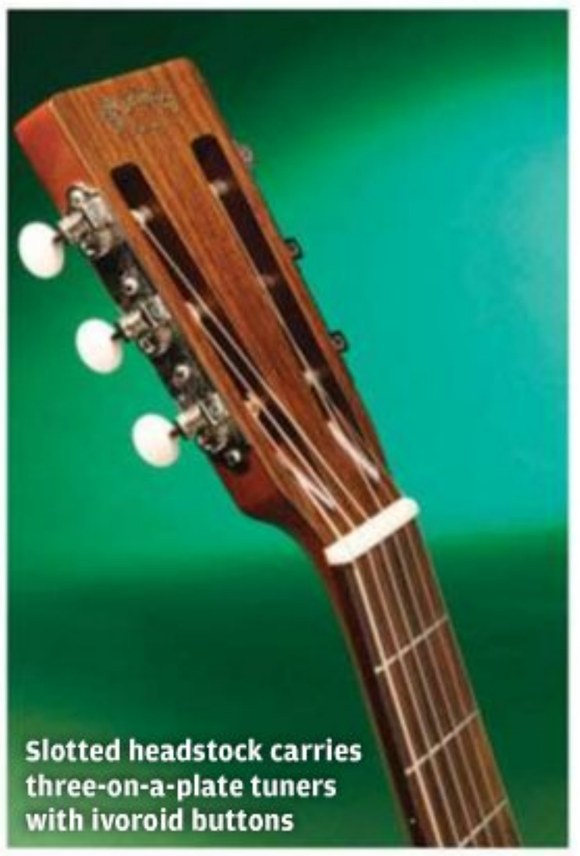
Originally produced in 1940, discontinued during the '60s and then reintroduced in '97, Martin's no-frills all-mahogany 15 Series was subsequently whittled down to fewer and fewer models. In 2010, however, it relaunched the 00-15M, 000-15M and D-15M, their 'M' suffix denoting genuine mahogany rather than the sapele the company had been substituting at various times previously. Now, the mahogany reprise has been extended to the DC-15ME cutaway dread electro and the 12-fret slot-head 000-15SM.

000-15SM

Exactly why Martin switched to sapele isn't clear, but presumably it was for cost reasons. It's tonally very similar to mahogany, the main difference being visual, the wood having a stripier, more linear graining. Looking at the 000-15SM and its dread counterpart's speckly grain patterning on both body and neck, it's evident that we're back in real (all-solid) mahogany territory.

The 15s' theme is austerity so there's no body binding, but trim detailing does run to a narrow five-ply soundhole ring, a rosewood headstock facing, tortie pickguard and discreet diamond-square pearl markers at the fifth, seventh and ninth positions. The rosewood fingerboard has a bound look, niftily achieved through the use of pocketed frets; the Spanish-style tuners carry ivoroid buttons. The instrument's satin finish over the fairly deep-brown coloured stain is applied lightly enough to feel a hint of grain but the overall touch is evenly smooth and not unduly agricultural in the hand. ➔

The 15 Series' no-binding philosophy allows for a generous cost-cut



Slotted headstock carries three-on-a-plate tuners with ivoroid buttons

The theme is austerity but we still get a five-ply soundhole ring, tortie guard and diamond-square position markers

FACTFILE
Martin 000-15SM

DESCRIPTION **12-fret, slot-head 000. Made in US**
PRICE **£1399 inc. case**

BUILD **Solid mahogany top, back, sides, neck; 20-fret bound-look rosewood board. Rosewood bridge, bone nut/saddle**
OPTIONS **Modern-shape, 14-fret 000-15M (£1099)**
LEFT-HANDERS **To order, no extra cost**
FINISH **Satin natural**

SCALE LENGTH
645mm/25.4"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 44.5mm
12th fret 57mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 20.5mm
Eighth fret 22mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 39mm
Bridge 57mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 1.8mm
12th fret bass 2.2mm

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FACTFILE
Martin DC-15ME

DESCRIPTION **Cutaway dreadnought electro-acoustic. Made in US**
PRICE **£1399 inc. case**

BUILD **Solid mahogany top, solid mahogany back and sides. Mahogany neck with 20-fret bound-look rosewood fingerboard. Rosewood bridge, Tusq nut and saddle, nickel open-geared tuners, two strap buttons. Shadow NanoMag fingerboard-mounted pickup, endpin preamp with soundhole volume and tone controls**
OPTIONS **Acoustic non-cutaway D-15M (£1099)**
LEFT-HANDERS **To order, no extra cost**
FINISH **Satin natural**

SCALE LENGTH
645mm/25.4"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 43mm
12th fret 53.5mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 20.5mm
Ninth fret 22.5mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 37mm
Bridge 55mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 1.7mm
12th fret bass 2.0mm
MAX RIM DEPTH **123mm**
MAX BODY WIDTH **398mm**
FINGERBOARD RADIUS **16"**
WEIGHT **1.93kg/4.25lb**

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D-14CP
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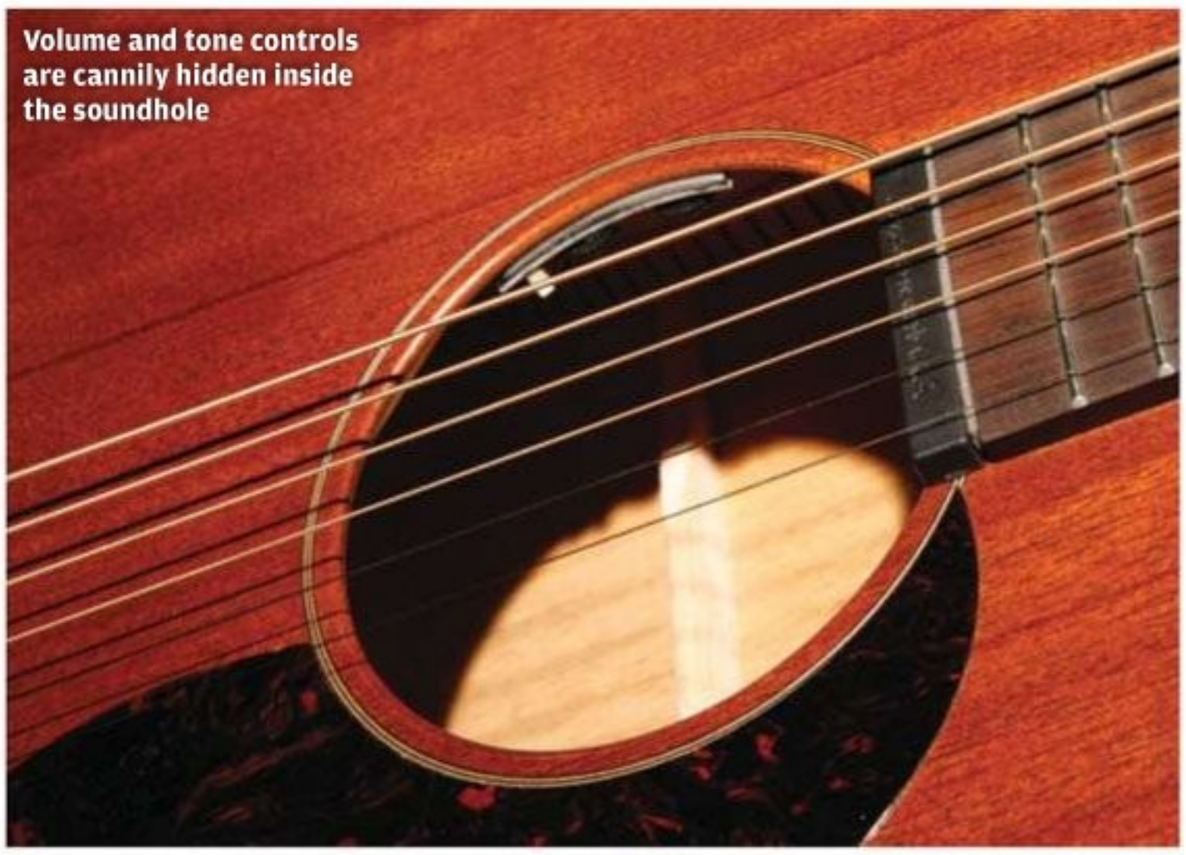
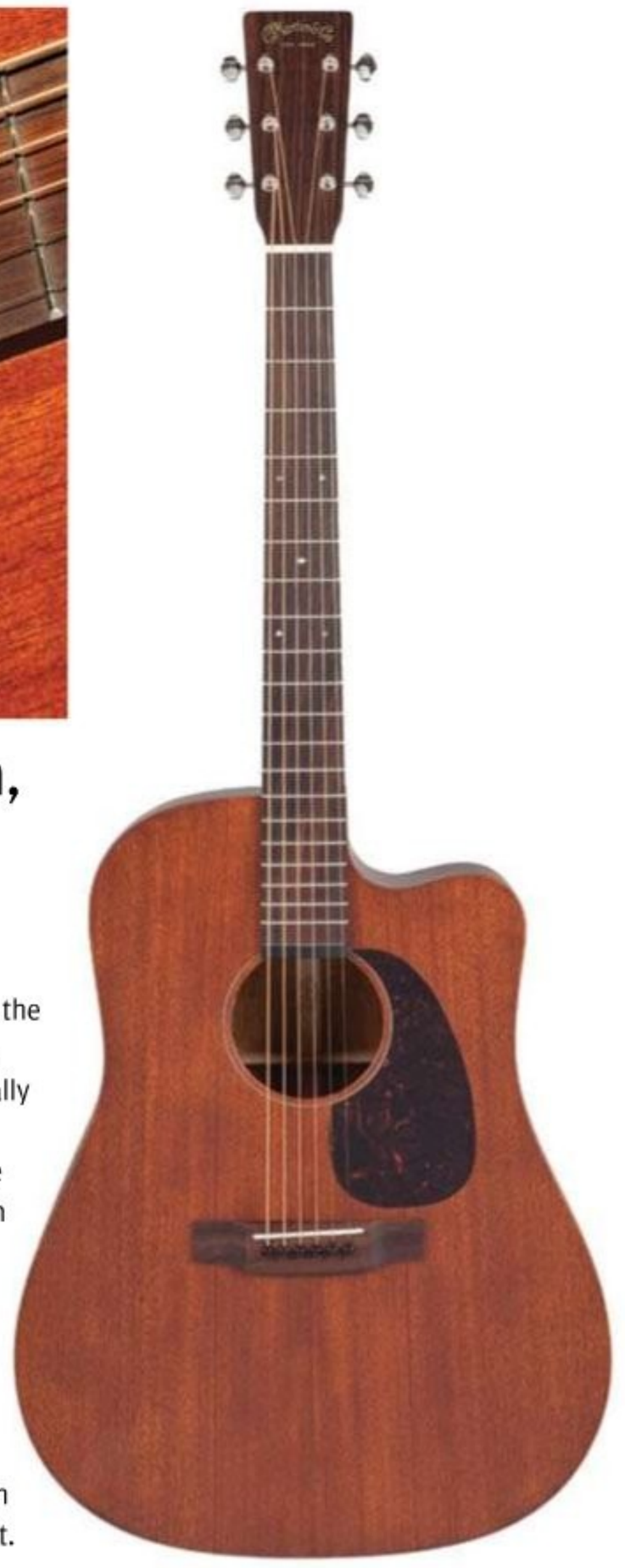
RRP **£1549**

Note: the above are all-solid wood and cutaway



Volume and tone controls are cannily hidden inside the soundhole



The DC-15ME is a worthy introduction, but we're not sure the NanoMag pickup offers any sonic advantages

As a 12-fret reincarnation of a pre-war style 000, it's no surprise to find that the guitar's 25.4"-scale one-piece neck is a fingerstyle affair, kicking off at 44.5mm across the nut, with a broad 57mm span at the octave and similarly generous bridge string spacing. A superb picker, it nevertheless remains comfortably accessible for general playing duties thanks to the neck's shallow 'C' profile: a Modified Low Oval in Martin parlance. The fretting is immaculately fitted and dressed, the action is low and fast.

Sounds

All-mahogany acoustics can sound overly dry, but this 000 offers plenty of in-built warmth, coupled with an airily-toned sweetness and definition, and engagingly supple dynamics and sustain. It's far from shy on outright volume and resonance either, thanks collectively to the 12-fret configuration, lightweight build and thin-coat finish.

DC-15ME

Presentationally, this 14-frets-to-the-body cutaway dreadnought is largely a re-run of the 000, but there are detail differences. The headstock is a regular spade variety toting Waverly-style open-geared tuners, and usefully there's a strap button at the neck heel. Internally, the rims carry vertical reinforcing strips, not deemed necessary on the shallower-rimmed folk. Still having a 25.4" scale length, the neck is fashioned to a mainstream span of 43mm at the nut, with correspondingly less broadening further up and an all-purpose 55mm bridge string spacing. Save for a smidge more depth towards the heel turn, the slinky low-oval profile is otherwise the same as the 000's and an equally enjoyable, fast-actioned player.

Not seen before on a Martin, the guitar's MicroSonic NMG VT system hails from the Shadow company and comprises a NanoMag pickup attached to the end of the fingerboard, linked to an endpin preamp with soundhole volume and tone wheels. The system's 9V battery is secured in a velcro pouch on the inner back of the instrument.

Sounds

Acoustically, the DC's delivery isn't as bullish as one might expect from the larger body. There's more thump in the lows, but volume and dynamics aren't appreciably bolder than the 000's. On the upside, it does share its stablemate's melodious tonal signature, making for a likeable, well-balanced strummer. Fired up, the MicroSonic is a curate's egg. It's capable of decent sounds, but the tone needs very careful handling. Rolled off too much, the lows are very dark; towards maximum the highs become tinnily bright. Strangely for this style of magnetic pickup, our sample's top E gain is slightly dominant, which doesn't help matters.

Verdict

Some will always prefer a magnetic over an undersaddle-based endpin system. We're not convinced the NanoMag offers any sonic advantages, which is a shame; the DC-15ME is otherwise a worthy introduction to the 15-Series fold. Happily, the 000-15SM attracts no caution. It's a gem of a 12-fret picker, which ought to convince more of us out there that cosmetic finery isn't the be-all and end-all. Plainness can be a virtue, and it certainly works here.

FINAL SCORE

MARTIN 000-15SM	
Build Quality	18/20
Playability	18/20
Sound	18/20
Value for money	18/20
Looks	16/20
TOTAL	88%

FINAL SCORE

MARTIN DC-15ME	
Build Quality	18/20
Playability	18/20
Sound	15/20
Value for money	17/20
Looks	16/20
TOTAL	84%

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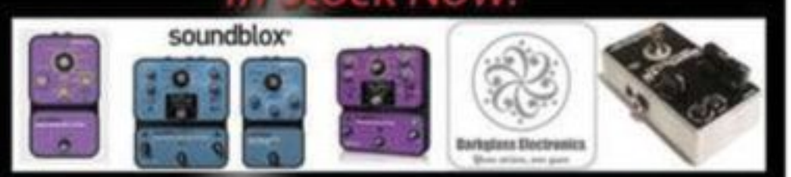

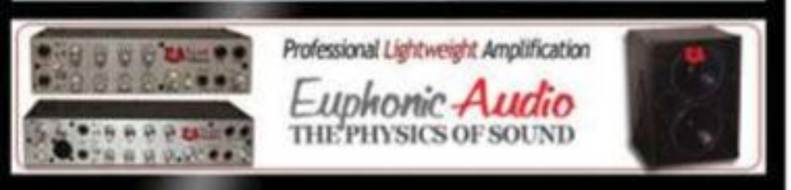

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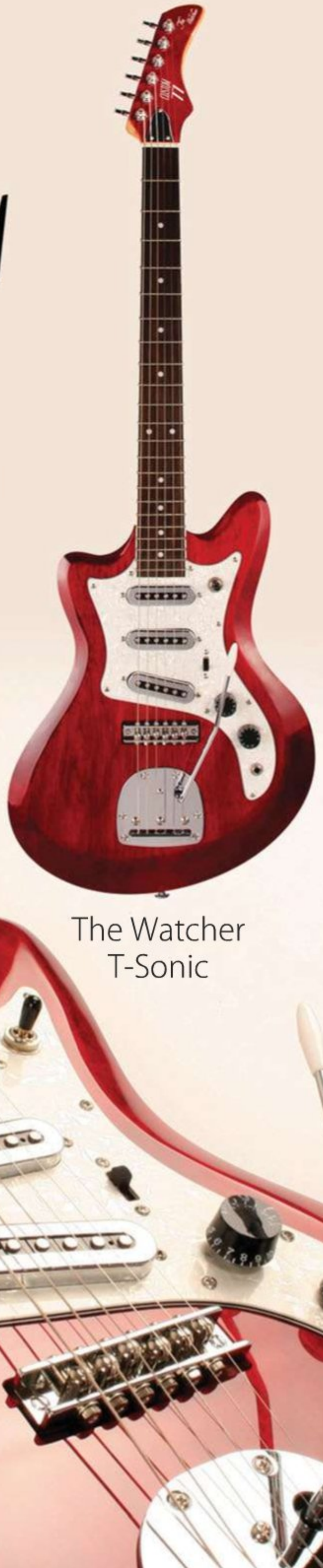

The Watcher
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Paul Guerin
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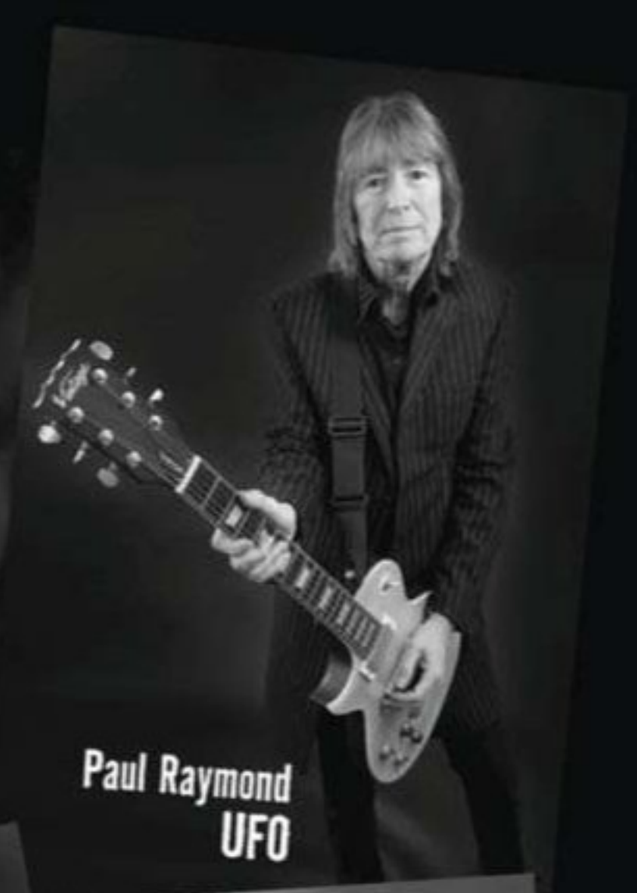
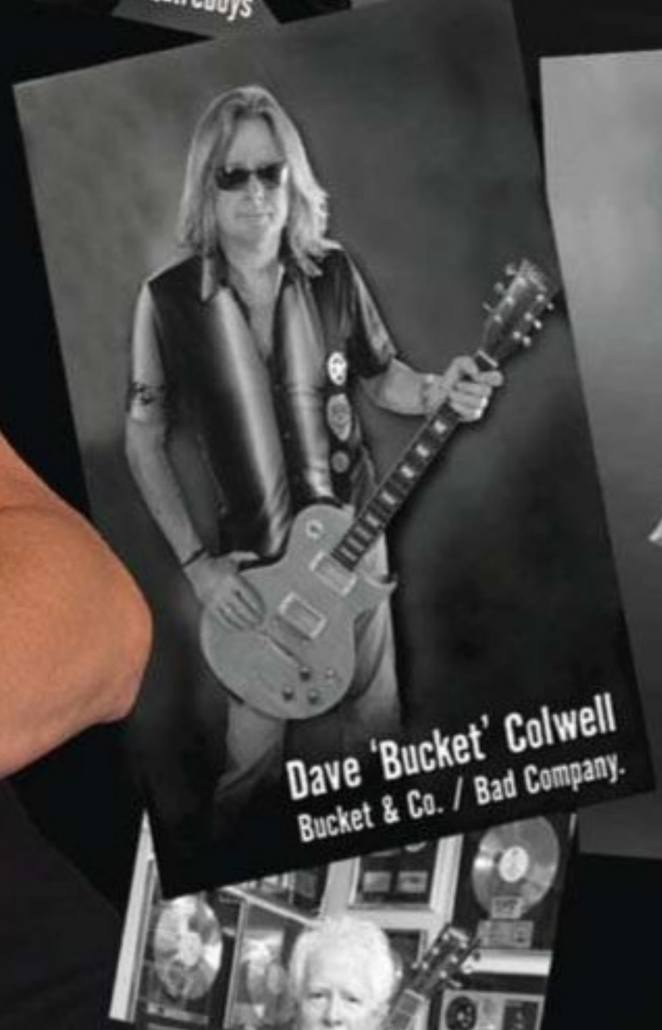
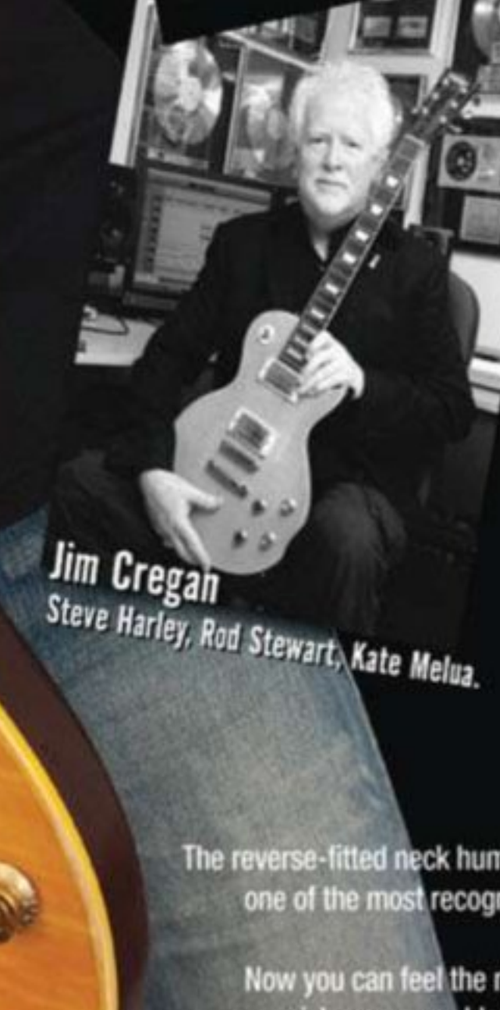


Paul Raymond
UFO

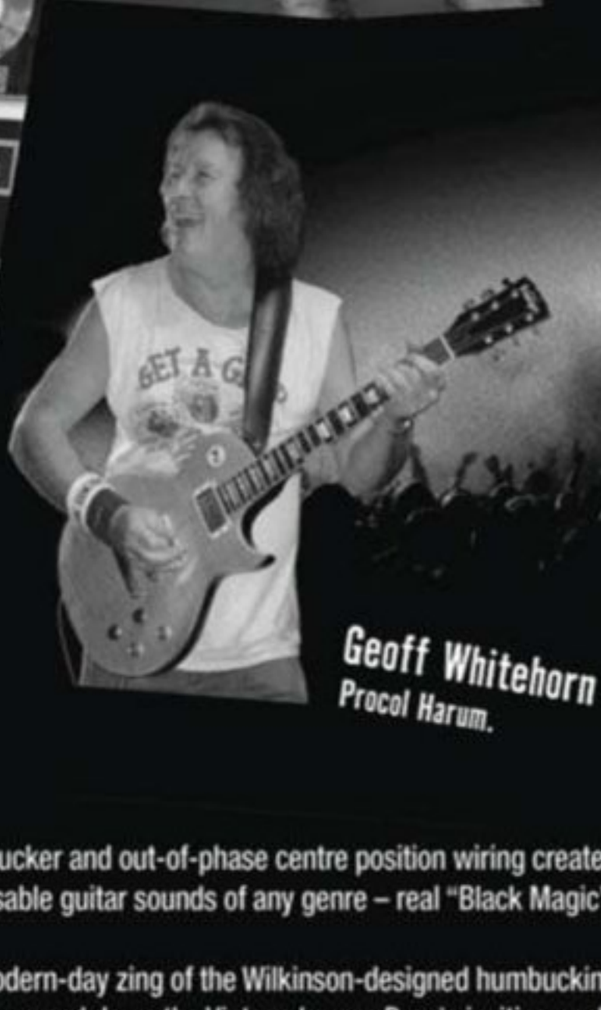


Dave 'Bucket' Colwell
Bucket & Co. / Bad Company.

John Parr



Jim Cregan
Steve Harley, Rod Stewart, Kate Melua.



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EASTMAN

E20D Dreadnought

Solid Adirondack spruce and solid rosewood back and sides is a common spec for a £3000 boutique guitar, but this Eastman comes in at less... much less. Review by **Jerry Uwins**

Little known in the UK until a distributor appointment last year, Eastman has in fact been making acoustics – along with archtop semis, mandolins, violins and bows – since the early 1990s. Founder Qian Ni established the company in the US but the instruments are made in China, in workshops that focus largely on handcrafting, using only the minimum of power tools. Despite this the range of flat-tops is extensive, with over 40 models divided into various series and body styles spanning prices from under £400 to nearly £1500. Our E20D dreadnought falls within the all-solid-wood Traditional Series which, as the name suggests, aims to capture the essence of pre-war instruments.

Unsurprisingly styled along Martinesque lines, the spruce/rosewood E20D takes part of its cue from the HD-28, courtesy of herringbone top purfling and a multi-ringed soundhole rosette. Other aspects of trim and hardware are more loosely period-generic, including an ebony belly bridge (with bone saddle) and a rosewood-capped spade peghead toting a smooth set of Gotoh, Waverly-style open-geared tuners. The unbound ebony fingerboard carries attractive pearl snowflake markers, while the bookmatched rosewood back features a pretty wood-mosaic centre strip. The whole instrument is handsomely finished in gloss nitrocellulose lacquer, and the internals are very cleanly fettled.

One leading feature of the guitar is the top, which is Adirondack, of which Eastman has its own private reserves. Generally regarded as one of the finest varieties of spruce for its claimed high volume ceiling and rich harmonics, the example here – with a little faint streaking and hint of curvy grain – isn't the finest visually that we've seen, but the ultimate proof will be in the playing.

> Adirondack is regarded as one of the finest spruces for its claimed high volume ceiling and rich harmonics

On a vintage-inspired dread like this, a fairly chunky, V'd neck wouldn't come as a surprise, but the one-piece-plus-heel mahogany length is actually fashioned to a modern, shallow 'C' profile, though a retro touch is provided by a diamond volute under the headstock. Allied to a full 25.5" scale and a nut span (44mm) just slightly broader than the average, the upshot is a fine, easy, versatile player, helped by a well-judged action set-up and mainstream bridge string spacing. The frets are nicely polished, though their slightly nibby-feeling ends would benefit from more rounding off.

Sounds

Whether or not the Adirondack top is playing a significant role, the guitar is certainly a rewardingly punchy dread. The low end is warm and firm, an edge in the midrange aids attack and projection, while the highs are sunnily toned without being overly bright. In short, it's a well poised big-body delivery that tackles the job with ease.

Verdict

Judged on the proficiency and elegance of the E20D, Eastman can be considered a long overdue discovery. Class quality is plain to see, feel and hear, and experiencing more of what the brand has to offer is a welcome prospect.

FINAL SCORE

EASTMAN E20D DREADNOUGHT	
Build Quality	18/20
Playability	18/20
Sound	18/20
Value for money	17/20
Looks	17/20
TOTAL	88%

FACTFILE

Eastman E20D

DESCRIPTION **Dreadnought acoustic. Made in China**
PRICE **£999 inc. case**

BUILD **Solid red spruce top, solid rosewood back/sides. Mahogany neck, 20-fret ebony board. Ebony bridge, bone nut/saddle**
OPTIONS **Adirondack/mahogany E10D (£879). Also sitka/mahogany E6D (£659) and rosewood E8D (£799). All include case**
LEFT-HANDERS **No**
FINISH **Gloss natural**

SCALE LENGTH
648mm/25.5"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 44mm
12th fret 53.5mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 20.5mm
Ninth fret 21mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 38.5mm
Bridge 55mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 2.3mm
12th fret bass 2.5mm

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BASSLINES

GIBSON
Krist Novoselic RD Bass

Nirvana's bassist relied on the cutting power of his maple RD Artists around the time of *Nevermind*. Now Gibson is celebrating the album's 20th anniversary with a new model. Review by **Gareth Morgan**

Gibson introduced the short-lived RD series in 1977, initially offering two basses, the RD Standard and RD Artist. Ten years later, and five years after the line had been discontinued, singer/guitarist Kurt Cobain and bassist Krist Novoselic formed Nirvana. The band rapidly established themselves as part of the Seattle grunge scene, and in 1991, with Dave Grohl on drums, they released their second and most successful album, *Nevermind*, with Novoselic playing all the basslines to classics such as *Come As You Are* and *Smells Like Teen Spirit* on his trusty RD bass. Fast forward to the present, and Gibson has released the Krist Novoselic Signature RD model to celebrate the 20th anniversary of *Nevermind* and acknowledge Novoselic's contribution to contemporary rock bass playing.

The RD's solid maple body is pretty much a composite of the Explorer guitar and Thunderbird bass shapes, although it has fewer straight lines and is less spiky than either. The pickguard might look like an inverted template of a child's drawing of a farmyard animal, but the expertly-applied ebony black nitro finish means this bass exudes pure menace. This is a bulky instrument; a minor ribcage chamfer on the rear top edge helps playing comfort, but there's a lot of mass here – the body's as much as 42mm deep in places, and solid maple means serious poundage... a whopping 5.5kg, or 12.2lbs. A comfort strap will help deal with that, but this is still probably the heaviest four-string bass we've ever played. However, the RD does balance very well on a strap, so that offsets some of the discomfort.

Maple body and maple neck with a glued neck joint. Black is the only colour

Traditional two-per-side headstock with beefy strengthening volute

The solid maple body means that at 12.2lbs the Novoselic RD is one of the heaviest four-strings we've ever played

The maple neck is affixed to the body using the set-in method, affixed via a tightly fitted mortise-and-tenant joint and secured using an appropriate adhesive. Historically, it's unusual for Gibson to use maple for both body and neck – there's usually some mahogany in there somewhere – but maple is right for the RD, and recent issues of the ➔

FACTFILE
Gibson Novoselic RD Bass

DESCRIPTION **Solidbody bass. Made in USA**
PRICE **£1099 including hardshell case**

BUILD **Maple body, set maple neck with 20 medium nickel frets on an obeche fingerboard. Grover shamrock tuners and Gibson three-point string-through bridge. Chrome hardware**
ELECTRICS **Passive with one Seymour Duncan Basslines STK-Jn and one STK-Jb pickup. Two pickup volumes and a master tone control**
LEFT HANDER **No**
FINISHES **Black ebony only**
RANGE OPTIONS **None**

SCALE LENGTH **864mm/34"**
WIDTH OF NECK
Nut 40mm
12th fret 54mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 21mm
12th fret 24mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 11mm
Bridge 17.5mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 2mm
12th fret bass 2.5mm
WEIGHT **5.5kg/12.1lbs**

CONTACT **Gibson UK**
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Thunderbird IV
The origin of the RD bass lies with the reverse-body Thunderbird, a rock'n'roll bass if there ever was one. This nice through-neck reissue comes with powerful TB Plus ceramic magnet humbuckers
RRP **£1199**

Sandberg
California TT
Let's face it, the Novoselic looks like a '70s Gibson but the pickups say otherwise. This German bass has the same set-up, and it's lovely
RRP **£1378**

Fender
Classic Series '70s Precision Bass
A zillion bands have proved that a Precision is True Rock. This one comes with a maple neck and block fingerboard markers
RRP **£1102**

Ripper II and Grabber II have shared the same construction. The neck is finished in the same ebony black, and the profile has a reassuring old-school substance whilst still managing to feel comfortable and highly playable. A strengthening bulge marks the point at which neck becomes headstock, and the headstock itself is the familiar back-angled open-book design with a Corian nut. Corian is a brand-name given to a synthetic material normally used in the production of kitchen worktops, and although not especially hard-wearing it's highly suitable for the purpose. Gibson has fitted a set of chrome Grovers with 'shamrock' keys.

The fingerboard is made out of obeche, an African hardwood sometimes used to make parts of saunas. The colour is now similar to that of ebony, but there's more visible grain patterning. You'll find 20 medium nickel frets, as well as acrylic dot markers and smaller white dots on the top edge.

Gibson's three-point bridge gives the option to top-load or go string-through. The latter method is purported to improve sustain, and the good thing about bridges like this is that you've got the means to test the theory.

Dyed obeche fingerboards were introduced by Gibson on the Gothic Morte SG and LP

Gibson has made an unusual choice in fitting pickups that you'd be more likely to find on a Fender Jazz Bass, namely a pair of Seymour Duncan Basslines STK Hot Stacks, a J2n at the neck and a J2b at the bridge. Gibson says these will produce the harmonic richness of single-coils coupled with the noise-cancelling properties of humbuckers. The three black speed knobs are two volumes and a master tone.

If you're looking for rock sounds and you play with a pick, then the Novoselic RD Bass will make you pretty happy

Three-point bridge gives the option of top-loading or going strings-through

Sounds

Pickups and controls are where the Jazz Bass similarities end, as tonally speaking the RD is quite definitely its own bass. In terms of bottom end you only get a modicum of really deep rumble, so as ever with passive basses, if you want earth-shaking lows you'll need to invoke the EQ on your amp or the desk; don't expect to dial up Novoselic's booming tone on songs like *Bleed* and *Lithium* using only the onboard master tone.

Most importantly, however, the sound is clean and clear... although the clarity is informed by the high mids and is thus a little nasal. This means that the highs don't feel as natural as the pickups suggest they should, and certainly never get anywhere near explosive or aggressive. Those of you looking to sound authentic should note that Novoselic plays with a pick and quite a lot of the attack (and all of the 'clank') in his tone is from really nailing the strings with a small piece of plastic.

Rolling the tone control back from 10 to 5 produces a more even midrange without too much reduction in definition – a tone that'll work underneath the acoustic guitar on songs like *Polly* or for more polite pop music. Full cut is smoother and thuddier and as the RD still retains reasonable definition, actually fairly practical.

Interestingly, neither of the individual pickup options are as zingy as twin pickup mode. With the neck pickup, the tone is earthy and organic with a pleasing acoustic feel – excellent for soul and blues – and with the bridge you get a sanitised version of the usual burpy gurgle with decent width and a well-matched output level.

Verdict

Historically, Gibson are really good at making basses you have to fight to get the best out of – and the weighty Novoselic RD is a prime example. We'd guess that fingerstyle players will not enjoy the tone, nor the way the triangular upper bout upsets their basic technical approach. but this isn't really the point. Anyone looking to grab one of these for Nirvana-type sounds or other grunge- or rock-related applications will probably be pretty happy, especially if they play with a pick, and they'll also look extremely cool. The appropriate tones are easy to find, and once you get into it the well-priced Novoselic RD is a lot of fun to play.

FINAL SCORE

GIBSON KRIST NOVOSELIC SIGNATURE	
Build Quality	**17**/20
Playability	**16**/20
Sound	**15**/20
Value for money	**15**/20
Vibe	**18**/20
TOTAL	**81%**

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EBS REIDMAR
250W Bass Head

The eagerly-awaited Reidmar gives that real EBS sound in a lightweight package – and, believe us, it sounds plenty big for 'only' 250W. Review by **Gareth Morgan**

Sweden's EBS has been making high-quality bass gear for over 20 years, and their burgeoning range of products includes amplifiers, cabinets and FX pedals. Their latest offering, the Reidmar head, marks a first foray into the world of lightweight class D amplifiers.

The Reidmar is a no-frills, black-finished metal box with a single carry-strap and it stands 75mm high, 360mm wide and 250mm deep on four chunky rubber feet. Because the power supply is digital, 'lightweight' really does mean light – this Chinese-made unit nudges the scales at a paltry 3.25kg/7.1lbs. The control panel – with a 'Viking longboat' pattern above – has a single line of chunky controls with an input jack at one end and red jewel light at the other.

Sounds

Plug into the Reidmar with EQ flat and you get a good clean reproduction of your instrument's acoustic sound. Volume seems mighty for just 250W at 4 ohms: EBS says the Reidmar does not automatically limit the signal before the power amp, giving better headroom and preserving tone at high volumes.

Things get even better when you engage the EQ. Dialling in bass gets seismic in double-quick time, especially if you venture anywhere near full boost, but nudge it to about halfway and you've got a pleasingly thick tone that'll rattle fixtures and fittings and fill plenty of space. The usefulness of the treble control depends on whether there's a horn in your cab; without one, boosting is all about a natural brightening of your sound, a clean clarity that helps each register to speak more lucidly. With a horn in tow, you might want to add just a fraction for more edge, but there's a clicky, clanky trade-off at higher levels. In terms of the midrange, the palette available is pleasingly varied. Boosting at lower frequencies increases the impact – it's flappy-trousers time if you boost near 100Hz with added bass on top. Further up the range you'll unearth classic punchiness, less weighty and more aggressive with a distinct snarl, and this becomes even more aggressive halfway between the 250 and 600Hz markers. The further clockwise you go, the brighter and barkier the tone until fully clockwise, which is 6kHz and the same frequency as the treble control. Bright has no discernable effect unless you're tweetered-up, whereupon it adds a more polished edge and extra snap. We found the single-knob compressor/limiter to be impressively musical.

The sensibly-priced EBS Reidmar is loud and offers lots of tonal variations in an easy-to-use, ultra-portable package

As well as the eight dials, there are two switches: Character, which accesses the ever-popular scooped mids sound, and Filter Active, which enables the EQ. The controls start with Gain, then the compressor/limiter (comp/limit), and next a four-band EQ. Bass and Treble are centre-indented dials offering +/-18dB @ 60Hz and 6kHz respectively, and the smoothly rotating Bright knob offers +/- 15dB @ 10kHz. The midrange section's frequency control has a range of 100Hz to 6kHz and a centre-indented gain control with up to 15dB cut/boost available across this range. On the back panel you'll find a Speakon speaker out and an XLR balanced DI out with pre/post EQ and ground/lift switches plus FX loop, phones and line out jack sockets.

Verdict

We like the EBS Reidmar very much indeed. It's loud, with lots of accessible tonal variations in an easy-to-use, ultra-portable package, and it's sensibly priced. We'd have liked twin speaker outs and a tuner out, but these are minor gripes; this is a welcome and advanced addition to the roster of lightweight bass heads.

FINAL SCORE

EBS REIDMAR 250W BASS HEAD	
Build Quality	**18** /20
Versatility	**17** /20
Sound	**17** /20
Value for money	**17** /20
Vibe	**16** /20
TOTAL	**85%**

FACTFILE
EBS Reidmar Bass Head

DESCRIPTION **Single channel 250W head with class D (digital) power amplifier. Made in China**
PRICE **£399**

CONTROLS **Gain, Comp/Limit, Bass, Middle, Middle Freq, Treble, Bright and Volume controls, Character and Filter (EQ) Active switches. Input, Phones, Line Out and FX loop jack sockets, Speakon speaker out, XLR Balanced Output with Pre/Post EQ and Ground/Lift switches**
RANGE OPTIONS **None**

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Why Elixir Strings

extend your tone life like no other string

A close look at the unique coating technology of Elixir Strings...

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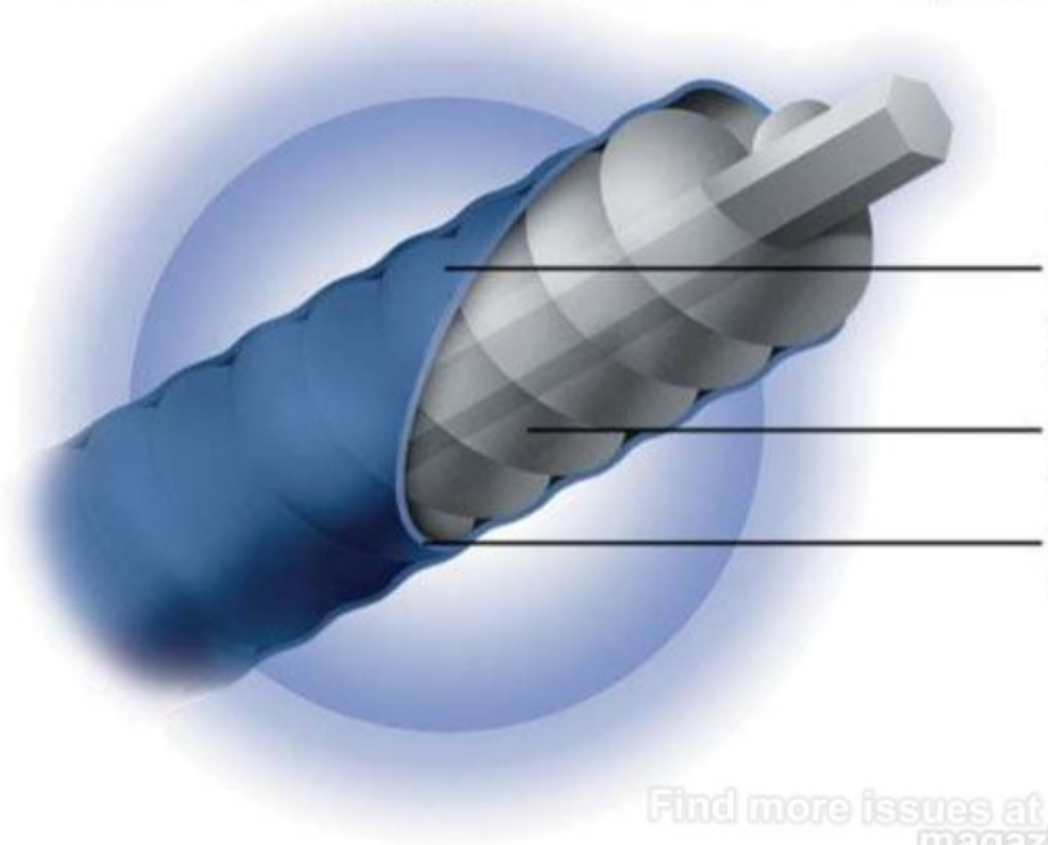
"I love these strings. They feel great, and still sound really good after a bunch of shows."
- Gus G

Elixir Strings: The Tone Life Leader

Elixir Strings is the only brand with a patented fluoropolymer coating that covers the entire string and forms a barrier against tone-killing gunk.



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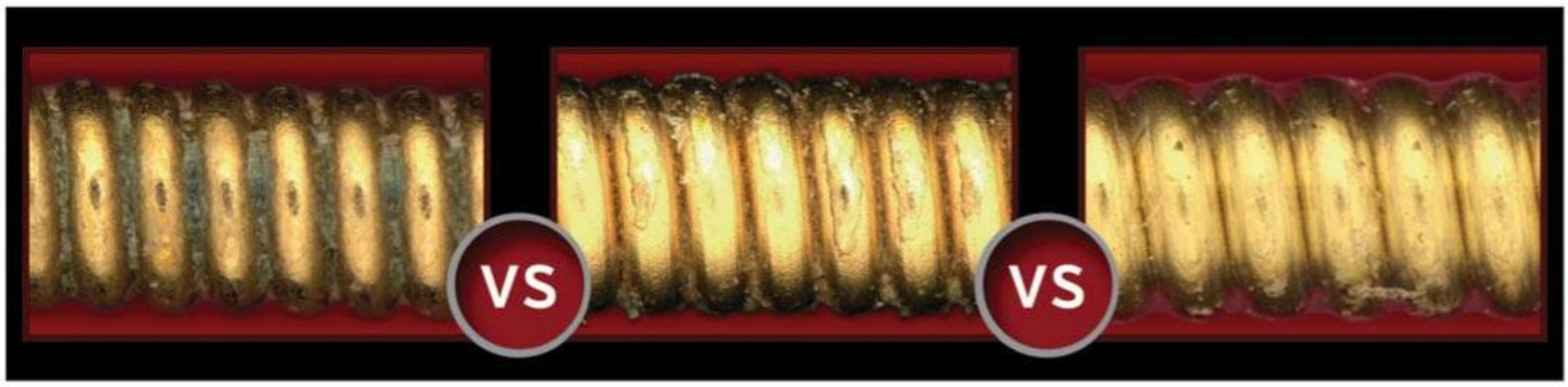
All strings are not created equal



Uncoated Strings

No protection from direct contact with your fingers

Bits of skin and dirt become trapped in the windings and the string is unable to vibrate as freely as when it was new

Sweat and skin oils cause the metal to corrode

Other Coated Strings

Do not provide a complete barrier

Debris gets into the gaps between the windings

Elixir Strings

The entire string is coated

Players report their tone lasts longer than any other string, uncoated or coated

The photos above are examples of what can happen to your strings after about 15 hours of play

Take a look at the close-up photos above. You can see why the uncoated string is sounding lifeless. Tiny bits of tone killing skin, oils and dirt are trapped in the windings and keep the uncoated string from vibrating. Sweat and skin oils have caused the metal to corrode.

With the other coated string, the wrap wire is protected, but the gaps between the windings remain vulnerable. Gunk still builds up between the windings, greatly reducing the strings vibration, and deadening the string sound. You could fight it by putting on new strings more often, but that solution is both time consuming and costly... and really, who wants to deal with changing strings all the time?

Why Elixir Strings Are Better

It's pretty simple, really. Elixir Strings prolong the life of your tone by protecting each string with a fluoropolymer coating over the windings. Result: Players tell us their tone lasts longer than any other string, uncoated or coated. The Elixir Strings coating forms a long-lasting barrier between the string and the environment, and since the entire outer surface of the string is coated, the gaps between the windings are protected. You get great tone when you put them on, and your tone stays great from gig to gig, session to session, for longer than any other string.

"I love Elixir Strings. They feel really comfortable and I don't need to change my strings over and over again."
- Yolanda Charles

"The warmth and depth of Elixir Strings is really important to my overall sound. They feel great and their tone lasts an incredibly long time."
- Eric Bibb

It's no wonder that tone-conscious artists like John Paul Jones, Newton Faulkner, Gus G, and many others turn to Elixir Strings. If you seek consistent great tone for your instruments, you will too.

Elixir Strings are available worldwide at tone-conscious music stores

Learn about the benefits of the Elixir Strings coating process compared to other coated and uncoated strings

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HOOKED ON CLASSICS

PROTECT AND SERVE

Most players old enough to have thought a hissy flanger was cool will have done something to a guitar that was, in retrospect, horrendous. Phil Harris is hardly innocent – but these days he's got a curator's attitude. Just louder...

Given that we all know the scarcity and value (both in terms of passion and cash money) of high-quality gear, you'd be forgiven for thinking that only an absolute fool (and I'm pulling my punches here) would need telling to look after it properly. Right?

Well, nowadays, that's mostly true. In fact, you could argue that some people go to far in the other direction, treating instruments that were meant to be played in a far too precious a manner that would be more worthy of a museum piece.

Now I'm not here to lecture you on the rights and wrongs of how to keep things in good order. It would be hypocritical of me to do so, given I've not been blameless on that score in the past. You see, I – like many other guitarists back in the '60s and '70s – was a slave to the fashion of the times, and I didn't think of the consequences. For example, in the early '70s I was impressed with Wishbone Ash and liked the look of the natural finish on Ted Turner's Strat. So I took my 1963 sunburst Strat apart, got the body out on my mum's balcony and, blasphemously, sanded it down to the wood. I then put on a coat of PU15 that bubbled and rose up like the Himalayas. From then on, if you weren't wearing a long-sleeved shirt it would take the skin off your arm when playing it.

And I didn't stop there. When glam rock came around, I saw a chance at redemption and had it sprayed by a car sprayer in black metalflake – with real metal in it. I had to get it shielded and it never stopped buzzing entirely, so I had to sell it as it was. That's how to ruin a guitar, twice.

I sanded my '63 Strat down. Later, I painted it metalflake black. That's how to ruin a guitar twice

Now that's not to say that every modification was so silly (at least, people didn't think so at the time). I put my 1958 Les Paul into situations now that make me shudder, but it became the first guitar I had that I refused to take on tour with me because I didn't want it damaged. So when I joined the Edgar Broughton band in '77, one of the two guitars I used was a '68 Les Paul goldtop with a sunburst refin and humbuckers fitted. It played well and looked like its more illustrious counterpart from a distance – and that was good enough for me.

As for the '58, I'd actually learned the lesson a little bit earlier, back in 1975 at Jack McCullough's wedding. His brother Jimmy was the guitarist in Wings and wanted to play along with me and the rest of the band that day. Now, given it was his brother's wedding, it was understandable that he wasn't entirely sober, but he still gave me a funny look when I wouldn't let him use my '58 Les Paul. The logic of my decision became clear when the other guitarist lent him his '63 Strat and one for the first things Jimmy did was 'play' the drummer's cymbal with the Strat's headstock!

Undoubtedly one of the worst abuses of a quality instrument I've ever come across, though, is the Kossoff/Clapton Les Paul. A truly iconic guitar... but when I went to see it, the back of the neck had been shaped into a V-section, and the back of the body where your hand goes had been rounded off. In addition, the bridge had been drilled out and mounted on thick posts. The tailpiece had been drilled so that if you ran your hands over it you'd get them cut to ribbons by the sharp edges. Boot polish was applied to the inlays – and I believe a third humbucker was about to be installed. I felt like animal rescue when I bought the guitar and took it to Roger Giffin, where it was lovingly restored in the right way.

I've said it once, and I'll bore you again with the sentiment; we're only custodians of these things. Please don't spoil them for future generations...

1958 FENDER TWEED TWIN

I've included this one to highlight a dilemma vintage collectors now face. Ten or more years ago if an amp needed some repairs, you'd fix things – in the right way. This would improve the value of the amp. Nowadays, in a lot of cases, the amp is worth more completely original, even if doesn't work as well. It's a strange old world...

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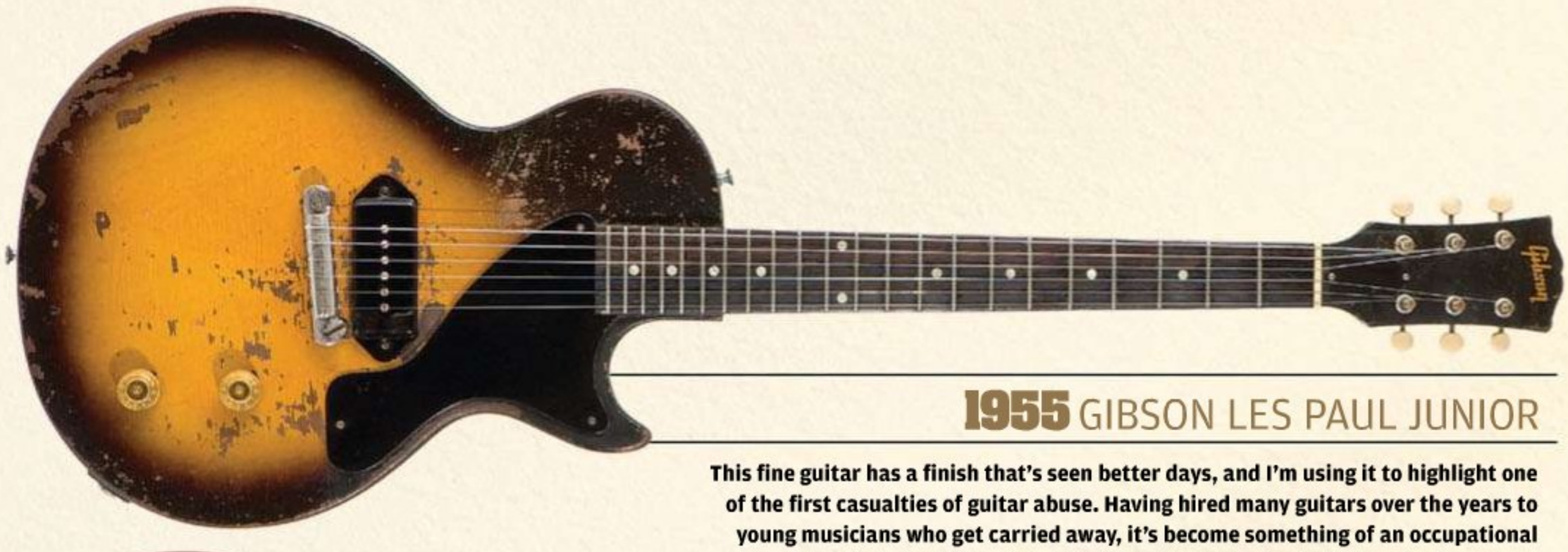
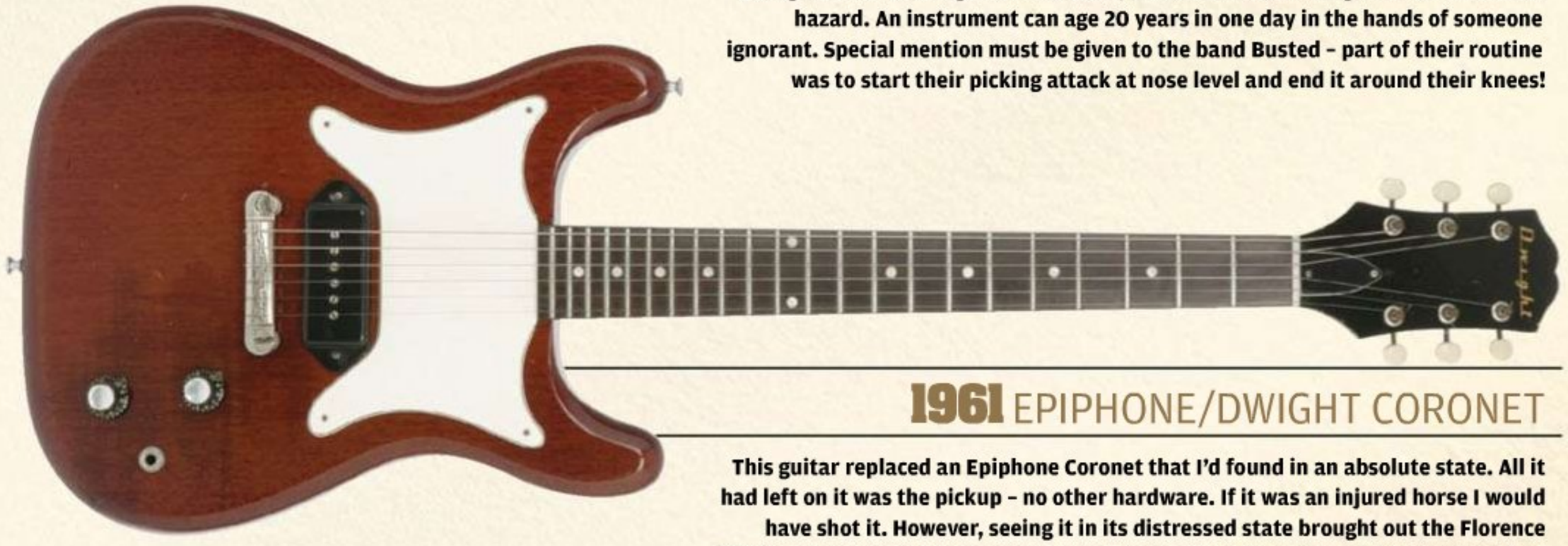


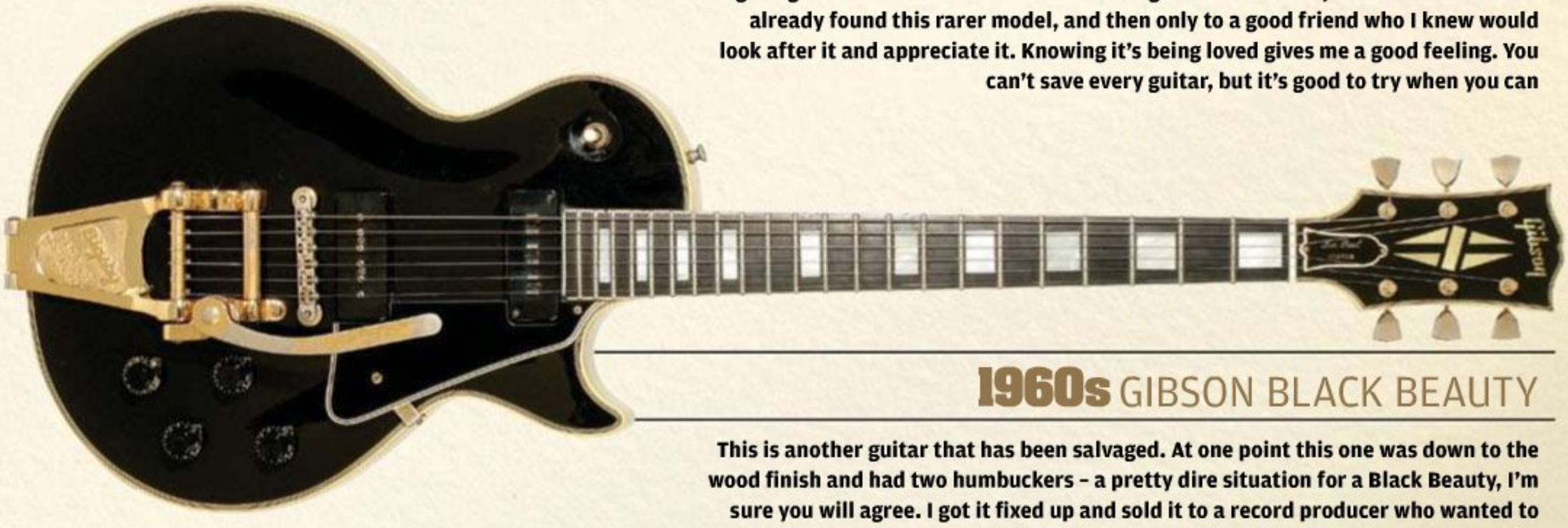
1955 GIBSON LES PAUL JUNIOR

This fine guitar has a finish that's seen better days, and I'm using it to highlight one of the first casualties of guitar abuse. Having hired many guitars over the years to young musicians who get carried away, it's become something of an occupational hazard. An instrument can age 20 years in one day in the hands of someone ignorant. Special mention must be given to the band Busted – part of their routine was to start their picking attack at nose level and end it around their knees!



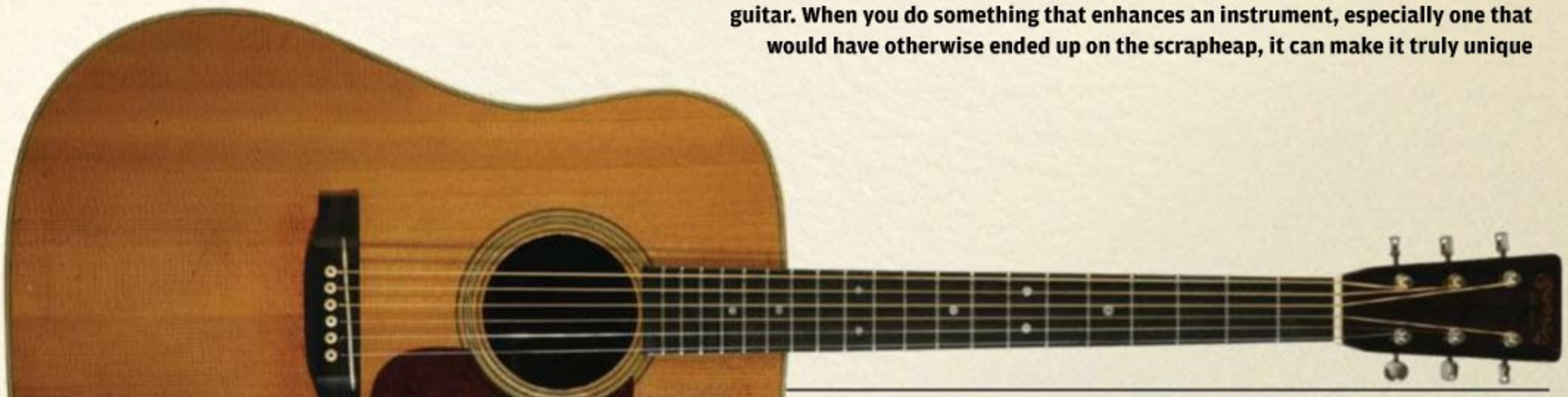
1961 EPIPHONE/DWIGHT CORONET

This guitar replaced an Epiphone Coronet that I'd found in an absolute state. All it had left on it was the pickup – no other hardware. If it was an injured horse I would have shot it. However, seeing it in its distressed state brought out the Florence Nightingale in me and it was nursed back to good health. I only sold it on when I had already found this rarer model, and then only to a good friend who I knew would look after it and appreciate it. Knowing it's being loved gives me a good feeling. You can't save every guitar, but it's good to try when you can



1960s GIBSON BLACK BEAUTY

This is another guitar that has been salvaged. At one point this one was down to the wood finish and had two humbuckers – a pretty dire situation for a Black Beauty, I'm sure you will agree. I got it fixed up and sold it to a record producer who wanted to put a Bigsby on it. It was done in the right way, and it adds something special to this guitar. When you do something that enhances an instrument, especially one that would have otherwise ended up on the scrapheap, it can make it truly unique



1947 MARTIN D-28

Given the more fragile nature of acoustics, you can go grey very quickly worrying about what can happen to them. I once had a Martin OM ruined by a musician because he couldn't stop playing it while leaping around – he did it some real damage. Again, finishes are also vulnerable, the headstock's vulnerable... in fact, just about everything is. It's a tribute to the skill of acoustic guitar makers that any of them survive at all, when you think about it

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THE BISHOP OF DENMARK STREET MANE ATTRACTION

Last month, Sid Bishop found juggling gigging and working in Top Gear in Tin Pan Alley became impossible. The shop won the battle - but a different kind of chaos soon ensued...

By early 1973 it had become evident that the 'funky little shop' with its tempting array of top quality stock was what our regular clientele expected. It become a little untidy at times, but that didn't seem to matter; it merely added to the general ambience. Customers would find it necessary to fight their way through a pile of massive cardboard cartons from which we'd just unpacked a shipment of Carlsbro 4x15" cabinets, or stumble through piles of straw or shredded newspaper from crates of newly-delivered guitars. We had no such thing as a delivery bay or unpacking area; all of this had to be carried out on the shop floor.

The tidy, shiny guitar 'superstores' of the time, such as Selmers in Charing Cross Road with nothing out of place, or the Fender Soundhouse in Tottenham Court Road with its coffee bar and odd jeans and T-shirt department, didn't seem to have the same street-cred – although they might have taken a different view. Guitar shops should have character, individuality and, most of all, a little bit of soul. It's better than the easy route of cramming a shop with rows of new Strats. Imagine if every shop looked identical: you'd trawl round the West End on a Saturday, finally plump for that delicious candy apple red Custom Telecaster you saw earlier... and forget which shop it was in!

We were fortunate; Top Gear was almost always busy and we rarely had time to get bored. It was all systems go from 10 o'clock in the morning (there was no point in opening any sooner, as musicians are not in the habit of getting up early) until half past five. Even if there happened to be very few customers, there was always dusting, cleaning, unpacking, re-stringing, tuning, or possibly the window needed re-dressing and the shop floor tidied and vacuumed. Inevitably there was the odd day when trade was more than a little slack, and it was on such a day that one of us had a bright idea to liven things up a bit. A trip down to a theatrical costume hire shop on Shaftesbury Avenue unearthed a rather sad-looking and threadbare pantomime horse outfit that had seen better days. It was brought back to the shop amidst choruses of stifled giggles. Two of us climbed into this ridiculous old thing, and, after a little practice (pantomime horses being surprisingly tricky to operate) we proceeded to trot around the shop and on to the street outside. It was the funniest thing any of us had seen – and that goes for everyone who saw the horse staggering clumsily around Denmark Street.

The Mare of Denmark St: would you buy a used guitar from a horse like this?

Photo: Ryan McVay/Getty

Other than the time I had spent as a pro musician, I had also served some years as a retail salesman during the 1960s, working for Take 6 and a handful of major London department stores. Right from the start of my time with Top Gear, I came to understand very early on that customer care was going to have to be of primary importance. Ripping people off was simply not part of the way things would be done, and I knew that the owners, Rod and Craig Bradley, were of the same mind. I'm sure that many members of the general public perceived secondhand guitar shops as being in the same league as secondhand car dealers. In truth, the trade had acquired a dreadful reputation in years past, sadly with some justification. I had determined, as far as Top Gear was concerned, that we were not going down that road, at least not on my watch, and looking back I think I succeeded. If somebody felt hard done by, or had bought something they genuinely didn't like, we'd take it back with (usually) no argument. As we all know, you are bound to get the odd complete idiot who is totally impossible to satisfy. In such cases we gave him his money back and firmly advised him to shop elsewhere. I'm sure that we must have made the odd error of judgement along the way, but we were only human, and I can assure anyone reading this now that we did our best – as proved by the success of Top Gear in the following years.

'The shiny guitar superstores didn't have the same street-cred. Guitar shops should have character, individuality and a little bit of soul'

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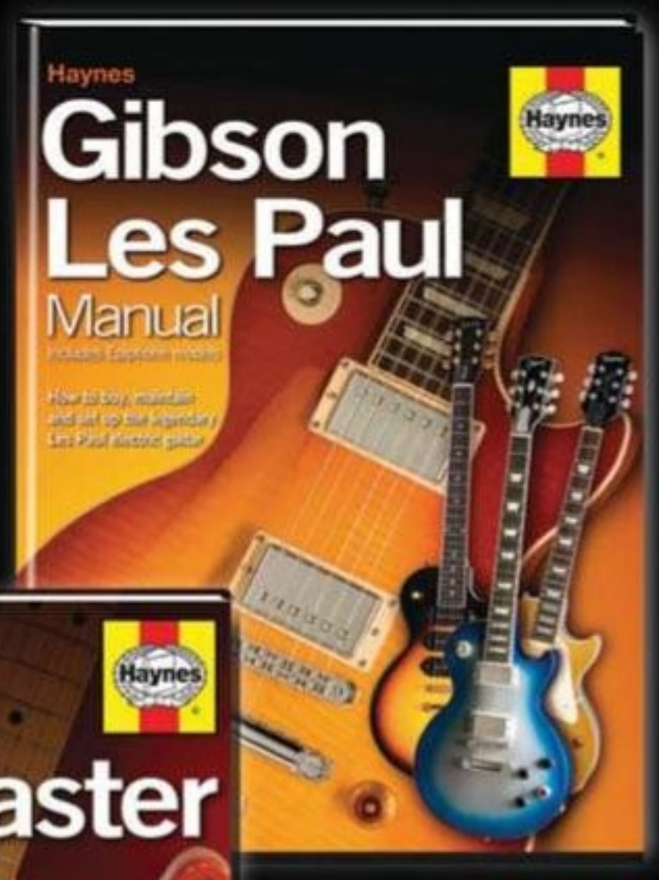

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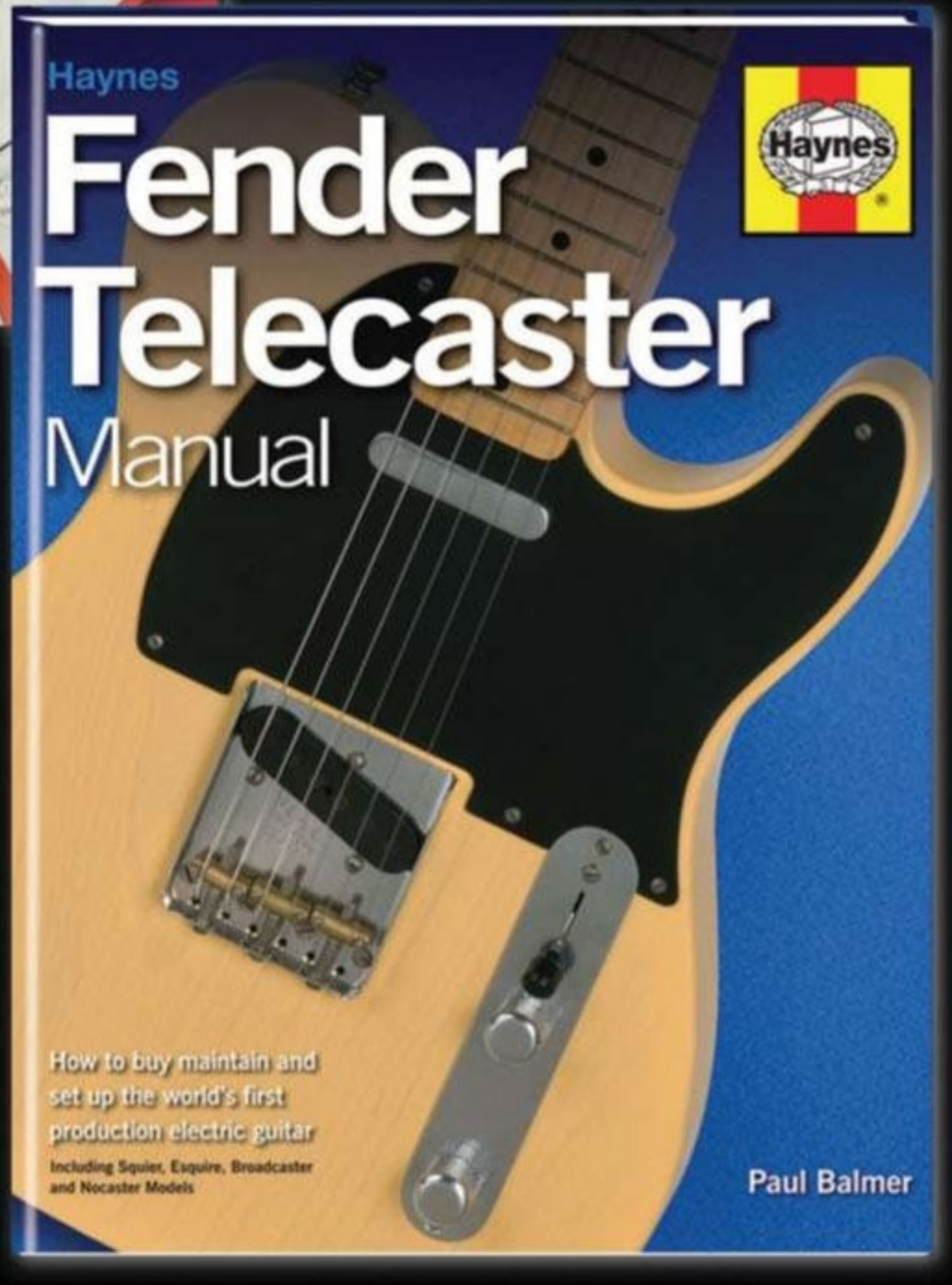

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PRIVATE COLLECTION

Diamonds ARE FOREVER

The filmically-named James Deane got his hard-rocking days over with in his teens. Now a solo artist, he supports his sweet Anglo/Americana songs with some carefully-chosen and inspirational guitars. Interview: Lars Mullen

Before we take a look at James Deane's beloved guitar collection, that's one subject which must be addressed... his name. 'Ah,' James smiles, 'well, for some reason my father just liked the name James. My mother was a bit worried about giving me the same name as a film star, even though our name is "Deane" and not "Dean', but my dad reckoned that by the time I grew up, James Dean wouldn't be as popular. I like it. And when I'm doing live shows, it's something that people tend to remember...'

Don't assume from James' natural quiff that he's a dyed-in-the-wool rock'n'roller. 'Guns N'Roses really got me into playing music,' he explains. 'I was about 11 when I heard them, and for a lot of kids back then they were the role model rock band. We all wanted to be the next Slash, wielding a Les Paul. The closest I got at the time was an Axis guitar, a gift from my parents, which I think came from somewhere in the Far East. It played fine and I used it for ages, although now it's just a box of bits. I must put it back together sometime...

'I used the Axis in my first band, Snug. We were just a bunch of school mates, but we went on to be quite popular. One of the lads who used to follow us around was the son of Phil Manzanera, Roxy Music's guitarist, so I made sure he passed on our demo to his dad. Phil liked the tape, so we all went around to his studio and recorded a blues jam and eventually he offered to manage us. I really had the bug to be a rock star!

'Phil was great... he got us on radio shows like Steve Lamacq, and we opened for Green Day, Catatonia and Skunk Anansie. We got a

1967 Gibson Barney Kessel with the 'regular'-spec double parallelogram inlays

A Japanese Silvertone 1475 with offset neck pickup and a '72 ES-335 with original trapeze tailpiece

Silvertone's broken logo

deal with Warner Brothers, released about five singles and toured Japan a couple of times. We recorded in some famous studios including Church Studios, Rockfield, and Konk, owned by the Kinks. It was all going well and it was very exciting for an 18-year old, but our drummer decided to go to university and we seemed to be musically drifting apart, so we decided to split up. I think that more or less playing every night in a rock band kind of got it out of my system. Though my late teens were all about listening to Guns N'Roses, Nirvana and the whole grunge scene, my shows are now a mixture of acoustic and electric with more of an overdriven sound.'

The Warners deal had included an advance to buy equipment, and James bought a bundle of mid-priced guitars. 'I admit I was a little naive about guitars at the time,' he says. 'Buying affordable guitars probably wasn't the best move. When Snug split and I started writing and recording my own stuff I decided to trade most of them in and upgrade to higher quality models. In hindsight, that was how my collection began. I've never really paid a high price for any of these. As a full-time musician, I use all of them on a regular basis... some live, some for recording. I'm always looking out for the next guitar, but a lot of these are with me for life. This can be a bit of a problem... the collection starts to get too big!

'One of the earliest models in my "trading-up" phase – and one that certainly won't be leaving me – is a 1967 Gibson Barney Kessel Regular, a double-cutaway semi-acoustic. It's a lovely guitar. I traded a '64 Fender Jaguar for it, which I'd bought for silly money.

'Guitars with character give me lots of inspiration for writing and recording. My Japanese Silvertone 1475 semi-acoustic tips its hat towards the Gretsch Country Gent, but it has its own style and sound. At some point in its life the "T" has snapped off the headstock logo, so it now reads "Silver'one"! It's really well-made, with some nice appointments like the side position markers on the fretboard. The gold has worn off the tailpiece a little, revealing the wood inlay. I used this one on a fair few tracks on my new album *Diamonds And Hearts*, like *Unwritten Song* and *Nobody Knows You Like I Do*, to provide more of a rocky rhythm. It sounds wonderful through my 15W EVA head and a Matamp 4x12" cab.

'This '72 Gibson ES-335 is my latest buy. I found it in a shop while on the search for a decent Strat. I was armed with an Epiphone acoustic which I hoped would be accepted with the cash difference. I just took a deep breath and asked the owner if he would do a swap, and how I kept cool when he said "Okay" I'll never know!

'It's now my first choice for playing shows, and I've retired the Kessel. I run the 335 through a pair of cranked-up Fender Champs, both built into one cabinet. If I need a cleaner sound I just back off the guitar. Gibson only produced the embossed pickup covers in '72, and the orientation of the polepieces on the neck and bridge units is reversed.'

James also has a nice selection of solidbodies that rarely get a chance to gather dust. 'The two Fender Mustangs get a lot of use. They take me back to being 18 in my grunge days – they've got that real essence of Nirvana. The clean one is a '74, while the other is a year younger. Both were eBay buys, at decent prices. I think people are a little unsure how to price these at the moment. I used one of them on the chorus of the ➔

'I run the Gibson 335 into a pair of Fender Champs, both built into one cabinet'

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A pair of Fender Mustangs, one from 1975 and one from 1974

'The Mustangs get a lot of use. They remind me of being 18 – it's the essence of Nirvana'

album's title track, *Diamonds And Hearts*, through my Fender Princeton combo.

'On that same chorus you can hear a deep punchy lead line played on this Danelectro baritone. I've also got a standard '56 single-cutaway six-string . These guitars are great value, and the lipstick pickups have such a distinctive tone. These two are always lying around the studio ready for developing guitar ideas.

'My Fernandes dates from '83. A lot of players are now categorising these '80s copies as "vintage" – they're certainly pretty stunning replicas. This one looks just like the real thing, apart from the name on the headstock, of course. They can be picked up surprisingly cheaply, and to me they play and sound better than most new budget guitars in this style. I changed the pickups for a set made by the Creamery in Manchester. There's always a lot of after-gig talk about how good this guitar sounds. I'm responsible for most of the dings, as I use it at every show. It means a lot to me, but I can relax a little more than if I have one of the Gibsons with me. It also sounds really nice through the two Fender Champs.'

For developing ideas in the weighty utterance department, James calls upon a pair of classic basses. 'I think my '84 Tokai Jazz Sound takes some beating. The metallic red with the matching headstock is pretty cool, too! It's got such a solid, warm low-end response and it delivers the goods no matter what style of music you play. I've heard a lot of bass players say the Tokais were better than some of the original Fender basses.

'My Fender Mustang Bass plays and records really well. I used it all over the album without having to mess around with the EQ on the desk... it seems to hit the spot every time, with a nice punchy midrange. On a few tracks I wanted a defined but soft muted tone, so I padded the strings at the bridge with a chunk of foam, played with a pick and cranked it through the studio's Fender Bassman. To me, this is more of an indie rock bass. It lets you approach bass in a different way – more like a guitar player, maybe.'

James has left his favourites until last – his acoustics. 'For me, old acoustics just do it every time,' he says. 'This little Kalamazoo KG-11 dates from the late '30s to early '40s, the era of the Great Depression. I'd been looking for one for ages on eBay, and then my wife and friends all chipped in and got one for me on my 30th birthday. I was so surprised, I just sat and looked at it for hours! These budget Gibson-made Kalamazoos are much more ➔

Korean-made Danelectros – a baritone and a 56 U2

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1984 Tokai Jazz Sound and a mid-'70s Fender Mustang Bass

reasonably-priced than real Gibsons. It's Robert Johnson and all the players from that era rolled into one... very woody and loud. It's perfect for recording solo runs, as the ladder bracing gives it that little extra punch. Because war was approaching they cut back on materials, so it's lacking a truss rod, and the neck is very thick. It's fascinating to think about who might have owned this guitar; the cardboard case itself is quite a piece of art.'

The nutty black archtop next to the Kalamazoo is still in James' collection thanks to a certain person. 'This German-made Lindberg Rumba dates from 1960, and it's the one guitar my wife likes! I was going to sell it at one time, but she persuaded me to keep it. Good move, as I've fallen in love with the cracked lacquer and the red position market at the 12th fret... it must have been really important to know where the octave was in those days! This was an eBay purchase at £180 and it arrived in a really bad way, but after buckets of TLC and new strings it came back to life. Chords sound really big and warm, and I use Nashville tuning to accentuate the brightness. I'm told the top and back are a laminate of mahogany and maple, with maple sides. It's a loud guitar and the neck is rather like a C-profile Strat neck, so it's nice to play. I find that archtops have more imperfections in the sound than a good flat top, but that adds character. The Lindberg has a big vintage tone no matter what chord or notes you play.'

Next up is a gorgeous Gibson LG-3. 'It's not that easy to date these, but it's from about '61 or '62,' James explains. 'I got this on eBay USA with the intention of selling it on in the UK as it was going really cheap, but it only took a few strums to realise the potential. It's a great little guitar. It doesn't have quite so much of the big-bodied low-end frequencies... it's more middly with plenty of high end, so in the studio you can literally stick a mic in the soundhole and record it flat, rather than having to mess about mixing out some of the bass response.

'The LG-3 is more or less a scaled-down version of this Gibson J-50 from 1950. The dynamics of this guitar are quite incredible. I think these are amazing all-round player's instruments... they can handle blues, folk, bluegrass or country.

'My Gibson J-50 had one previous owner, a lady who played it round little cafes in Paris'

'This one's in exceptionally good condition. The shop told me it had just one lady owner before me, who lived in France and played it around all the little cafés in Paris. That's probably why it's in such good condition – she must have polished it every day. It even had the old string-type strap tucked away in the original case. I think it's a fantastic story.

'The early '50s was a period when Gibson was still building fairly light slope-shoulder dreads – they really vibrate and are really loud. But they had so many back for warranty repairs with cracks everywhere that they decided to build them heavier in the late '50s, so lots of players prefer the earlier ones. Gibson also dropped these smaller teardrop scratchplates for a larger type in the mid-'50s, so these earlier ones are pretty collectible.

'After playing so much heavy music in my youth, performing my own songs with a mix of electric and acoustic guitars is a breath of fresh air. I needed a change, and got into acoustic music by listening to musicians like Gillian Welch, who performs with David Rawlings. I loved the sound of Gillian's J-50, and I feel privileged to own this one.'

James avoids selling guitars whenever humanly possible. 'The only time I've really sold a guitar for cash was to fund the recording and mixing of this album. I had to part with a lovely old Gibson 12-string acoustic, but during the recording I managed to recoup with this late '70s Takamine F400S 12-string. I've had it set up to perfection, and I must say it sounds just as good at a third of the price. This is one of the sought-after models with a headstock logo very similar to a Martin. I'm more in the Gibson camp when it comes to acoustic guitars – I just love that mellow warmth – but I do like the breathy high definition of some Martins. My Martin D-18 is ideal for a solo acoustic player.

'But my favourite of the acoustic bunch is my '68 Epiphone Frontier. I'll never sell

14-fret '30s or '40s Kalamazoo KG-11 and a German Lindberg Rumba

Early-'60s Gibson LG-3 and a small-guard 1950 Gibson J-50

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Left: James with his '68 Epiphone Frontier. Right: a Martin D-18 and a Takamine F400S 12-string

'My '68 Epiphone Frontier is my favourite. I'll never sell it – it's a reliable old friend'

it... it's too much of a reliable old friend, and I've gigged with it for four nights a week for four years. It was quite tired when I bought it, so I had it restored and never looked back. The workmanship is superb and the tone is beautiful. It's very dynamic and responds to the lightest touch. The only difference between this and a Gibson of similar specifications is the name on the headstock, as they were coming out of the same factory during this period. It's been played so much over the years, and the sound blends the warmth of the mature spruce soundboard with the brightness of the maple body.

'I've fitted an LR Baggs M1A which suits it down to the ground, especially for solo gigs. Chords are warm and well-balanced when strummed over the soundhole, but there's this big kick in the volume when I play lead lines at the bridge, which I don't think you get so much with an undersaddle system. I think sometimes they can be a little harsh.

'I also have what I call my "percussive collection". I've got a five-string banjo, plus a mandolin which is good for ideas. I've got a Kasuga classical guitar, and an unusual Greenop six-string banjo made in Leigh-on-Sea in England in the '20s. It's quite handy as I don't really know how to play a real banjo. It's rather like playing a normal guitar with a banjo sound, which is fun for some of the more rustic-sounding songs I'm writing for the next album. The bouzouki was made by Andy Ramsay, who recorded and mixed my album right here in Press Play studios in London. It was lying around in the control room and as soon as I started noodling on it I loved it straight away. He had no choice but to sell it to me! I've also got to thank Andy for letting us use the studio for the photos... it's one of the few places the air feels okay and I can relax with the guitars. I'm paranoid about humidity, especially on tour going from plane to car to hotel to gig and then back on the plane – that can be brutal to a sensitive guitar. Normally all my stuff is stored in humidified temperature-controlled rooms with the moisture at 55 per cent. I feel it's my duty to preserve the history of these guitars.'

For more information on James Deane go to http://jamesdeanemusic.com

L-r: unknown banjo strung as tenor, mandolin, Ramsay bouzouki, Kasuga classical and Greenop guitjo

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GUITAR TECHNIQUES

WORKSHOP Steve Vai

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Many would say *Passion & Warfare* remains the pinnacle of Steve Vai's career. **Douglas Noble** looks at his use of chords, scales, slurs, tapping and much more

Steve Vai's largely instrumental album *Passion & Warfare* is an encyclopedia of modern, post-Van Halen guitar techniques – tapping on the fretboard, vibrato arm excesses, pinch harmonics, natural harmonics – topped up with sweep picking, modal explorations and extreme sound processing.

A product of Boston's Berklee College of Music and an alumni of Frank Zappa's band, Vai was one of the first technically accomplished and highly schooled metal guitarists (he even wrote the main melody of the album's opening track, *Liberty*, on manuscript paper on a plane). Vai has occasionally commented that he sees himself more of a composer than a guitarist.

Passion & Warfare, says Vai, was 'conceived from a dream state event that took place when I was about 16 years old. This event is probably the single most important factor that I can pinpoint which was the inspiration for the development of the originality and individuality I possess with the guitar and music in general. More than being a strict guitar solo album, I feel this record to be thick with the density of my compositional skills as well.' Phew! And if that wasn't enough, Vai attempts to sum the album up as 'Jimi Hendrix meets Jesus Christ at a party thrown for Mel Blanc'.

Besides all the technical prowess and compositional aspirations, the album also reveals Vai's sense of humour, such as the school classroom dialogue of *The Audience Is Listening*, and draws upon his somewhat 'eccentric' nature. Before recording arguably the album's pivotal track, *For The Love Of God*, Vai fasted for several days to get into the right frame of mind, recorded the lead guitar in one take, then turned the studios lights off. Not surprisingly, it's a pretty intense album and Vai is the first to admit it may not be to everyone's liking. 'Music is completely art. There really is not any good or bad,' he offered. 'If one person likes a piece of art that the rest of the world hates, then to that person it's good and nobody has the right to take that away from them.' The following exercises look at some of the techniques used by Vai on the album, although given the scope and depth of the project we're only really scratching the surface. Enjoy!

STEVE VAI'S EQUIPMENT

Does Vai have a lot of gear? Um... yes. He helpfully commented that 'the conglomeration of equipment used on the album could choke an elephant'. His main electric guitars were three Ibanez Universe 7-strings – his black, white and multi-coloured models – plus his customised Charvel 'Green Meanie'. The 7-strings have an extra low string, tuned to B. Vai has mentioned that the 7-string electrics have an extra 'warmth' in the lower register, as can be heard in the ascending phrase from *For The Love Of God* starting at 4:30 (Vai used a .053" gauge on the bottom string). A Coral Sitar was used for the rhythm guitar part on the same song, and Guild 6-string and 12-string acoustic parts can be heard a various points on the album.

Vai primarily used Marshall amplifiers modified by Jose Arrendondo, with the notable exception of *Blue Powder* which was initially recorded as a demo track for Carvin amplifiers. He used many effects pedals, including a Boss Super Overdrive and a Cry Baby Wah.

Vai also used a Bob Bradshaw rack which included two Eventide H-3000 Harmonisers and a TC Electronics Chorus. The Eventide Harmoniser was the inspiration behind *Ballerina 12/24*, which makes use of the unit's delay, panning and harmonising capabilities.

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1 MISCELLANEOUS CHORDS

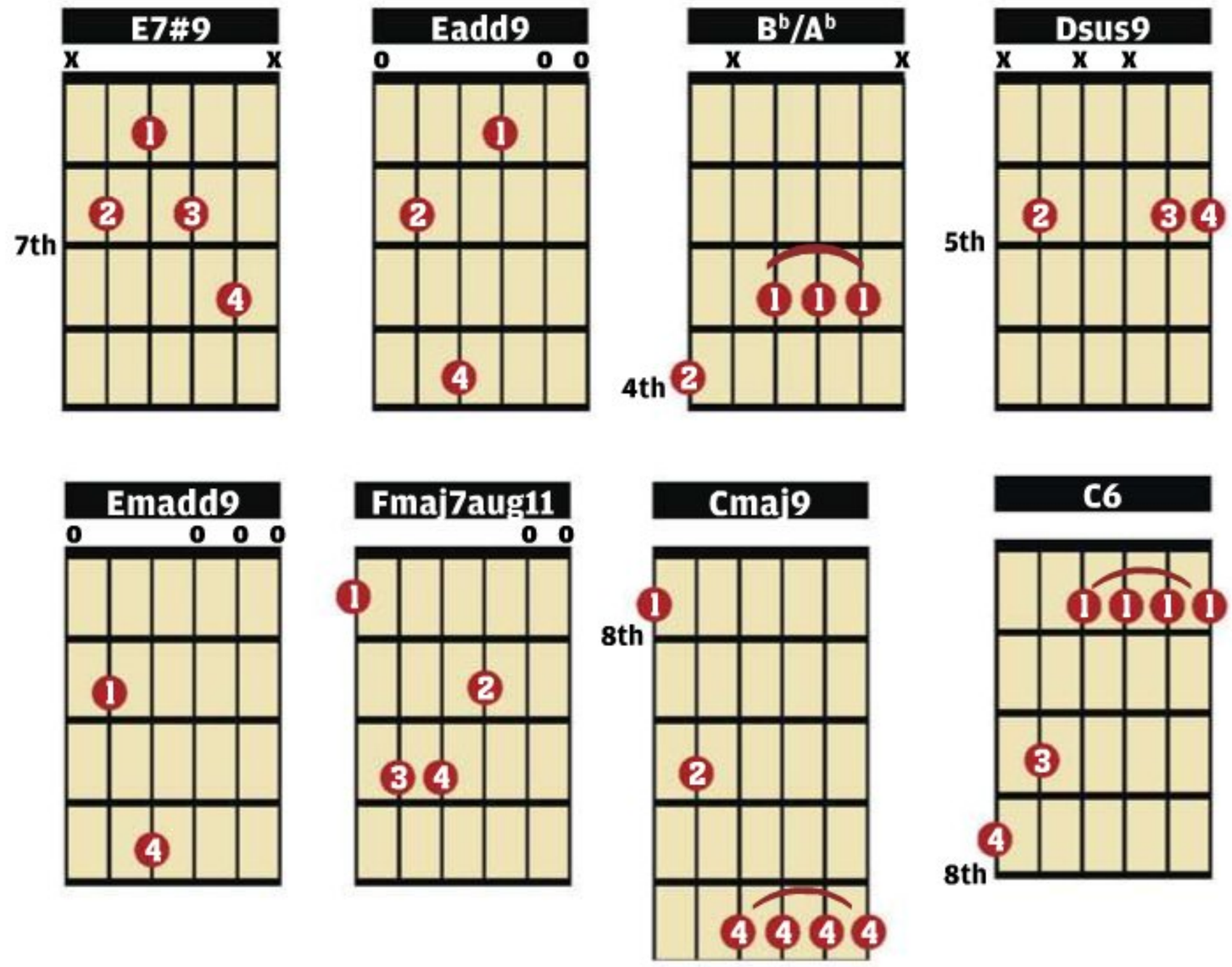
We're going to begin by outlining a collection of chords that Vai uses at various points in *Passion & Warfare*. The first three chords don't require any further musical illustration, whereas the remaining chords are explored further in Exercises 2, 3 and 4.

The fourth chord is the famous E7#9 'Hendrix' chord from *Purple Haze*. Vai uses it in *Erotic Nightmare* at 1:32 and at 3:34, and also at the start of *Greasy Kid's Stuff*, with the addition of the open bottom string.

Next is a voicing of Eadd9, which is strummed on an acoustic guitar in *Answers* at 0:28. Bb/Ab is used by Vai in *Blue Powder* at 1:06, then it is moved up the fretboard; Bb/Ab is a Bb chord on strings four, three and two with an Ab note on the bottom string.

Dsus9 involves damping the middle two strings. Both Emadd9 and Fmaj7aug11 makes important use of open strings, so make sure that your fretting hand fingers do not touch open strings.

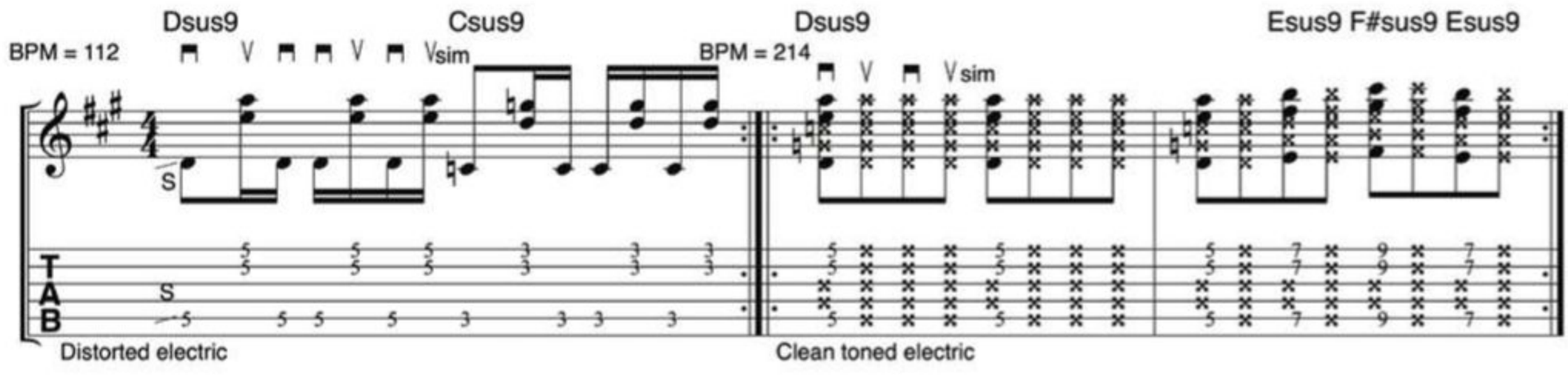
The final two chords, Cmaj9 and C6, are going to be used in a slightly unconventional manner in Exercise 4, but in the meantime practise them as written.



2 RHYTHM GUITAR PARTS USING SUS9 CHORDS

4/4 TIME

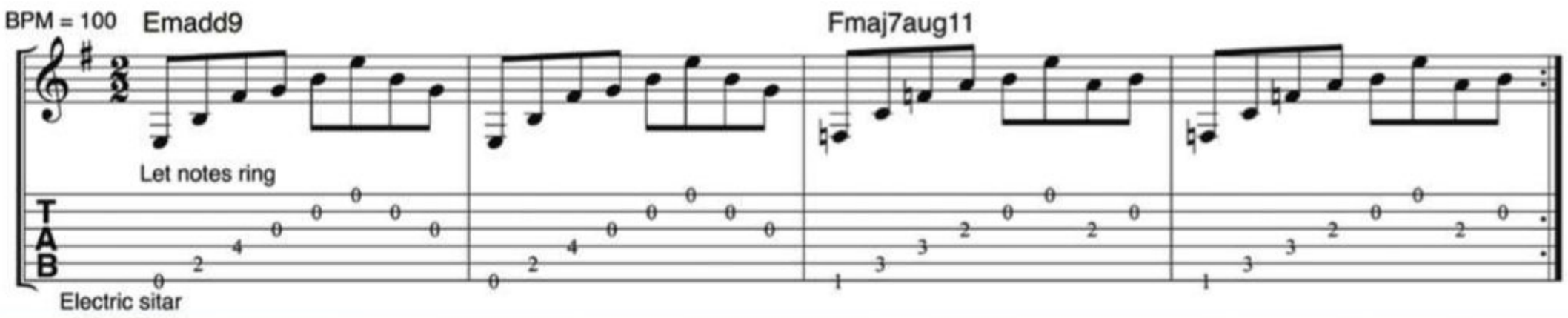
First, two uses for a great chord. Vai employs the Dsus9 shape from Ex1 in *Erotic Nightmare* at 0:18 and 0:31 in the style illustrated in bar 1 of the exercise – alternating between the bass note on the fifth string and the top two strings. This movable shape is also used for the *Answers* intro, similar to bars 2 and 3 of the exercise below, which makes extensive use of damped strings.



3 RHYTHM GUITAR PARTS PLUS ARPEGGIOS

2/2 TIME

Vai uses the Emadd9 and Fmaj7aug11 chord shapes from Ex 1 in the rhythm guitar part to *For The Love Of God* and lets the notes overlap. Chances are that you don't own an electric sitar... but just make do. Notice that both chords contain close intervals that are brought out when the chords are played as arpeggios – there's a minor second interval in Emadd9 and a major second in Fmaj7aug9.



4 PINCHED HARMONICS

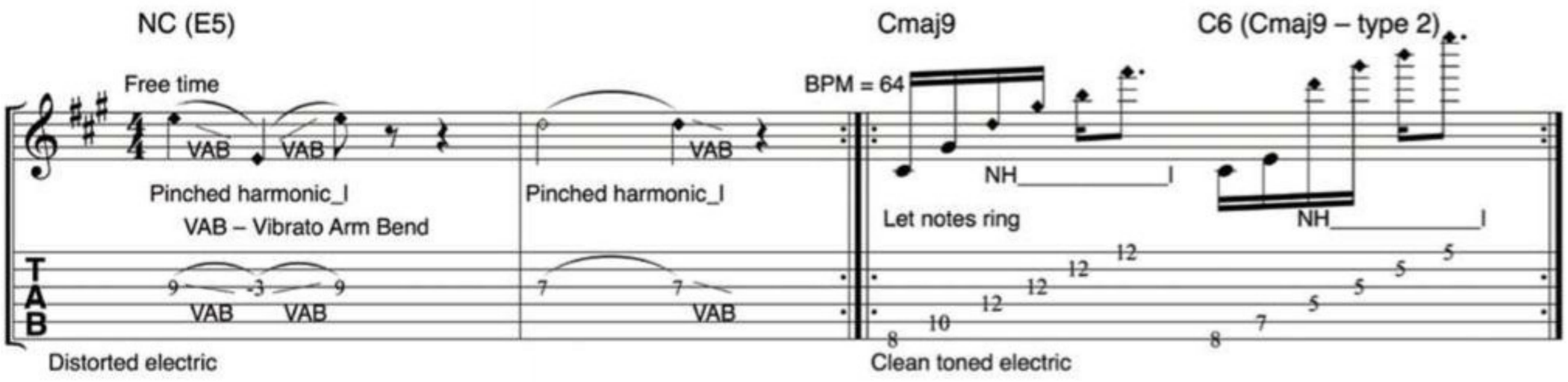
4/4 TIME

Vai makes a lot of use of both pinched harmonics and natural harmonics. Pinched harmonics manipulated by the vibrato arm similar to the ones in bars 1 and 2 can be heard in *Erotic Nightmares* at 0:16, and pinched harmonics in a more elaborate phrase can be heard at 0:32.

To produce a pinch harmonic, hold the plectrum so only a small part of it is showing and strike the string, with the thumb immediately behind the plectrum. After the plectrum has hit the string, aim to touch the string with the thumb: it's the thumb that actually sets off the harmonic. Experiment producing different harmonics at different parts of the string, but remember they come out best using distortion and the treble pickup. The ones in this exercise are meant to be manipulated with the vibrato – Vai's locking nut enables them to be lowered considerably.

Vai makes significant use of natural harmonics ('NH') in *Sisters* – at 0:55 he combines fretted notes with natural harmonics using the Cmaj9 and C6 shapes from Exercise 1, as illustrated here. For both chord shapes the lowest two notes are played normally, then the top four strings are touched lightly in order to produce natural harmonics from them... this requires a delicate and precise touch.

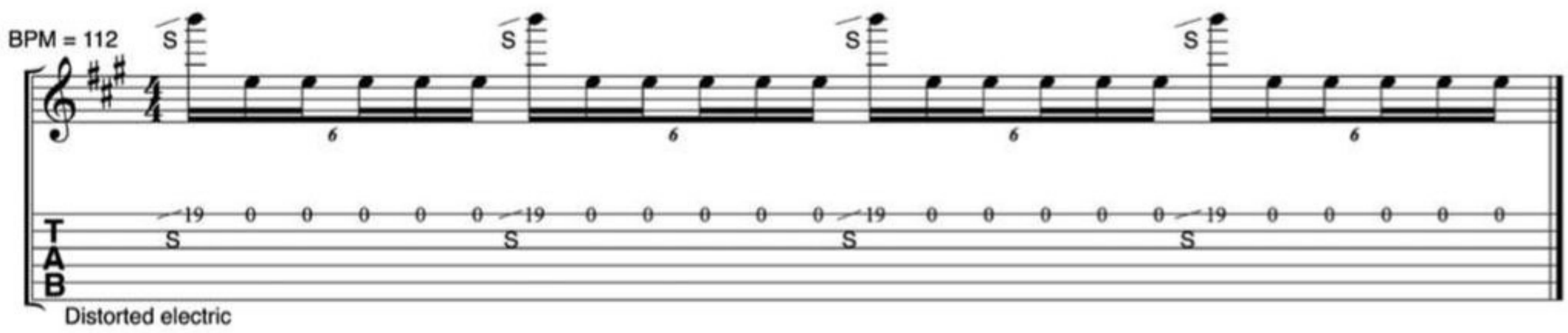
When the C6 shape is treated this way, due to the way harmonics are produced on the guitar the actual notes sounded produce a Cmaj9 chord, although different from the one sounded on the first two beats – hence the 'Cmaj9 type 2' chord notation.



5 OPEN STRING PEDAL LICKS

4/4 TIME

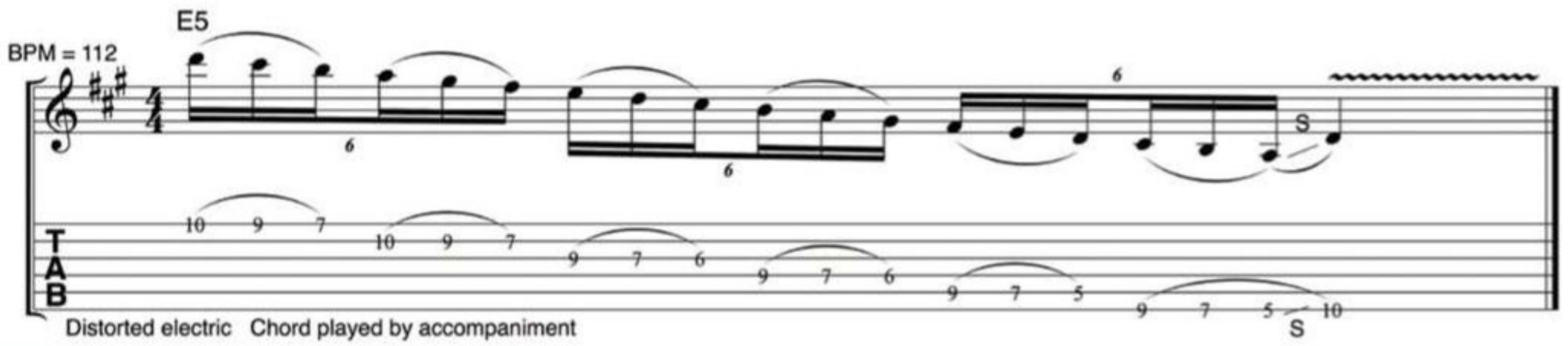
Vai occasionally uses open strings as 'pedals', playing a repeated open note while the notes above it change. Here's a basic version, which pays tribute to a phrase in *Erotic Nightmares* at 0:27. Played in sextuplets (six notes in the space of a beat), it consists of a slide up to high B on the top string, 19th fret followed by five open Es. Experiment with the length of the slides, and make it as exciting as possible!



6 SEXTUPLET SLURS

4/4 TIME

Vai also uses sextuplet slurs as fast, smooth scalar passages running down the fretboard – there's a great example to be found in *Erotic Nightmares* at 0:29. Make sure the slurs are clearly audible and that the slurred notes come out as loudly as the plucked notes. He can also be heard using this technique in *Blue Powder* at 1:46, where he taps the highest note on each string.



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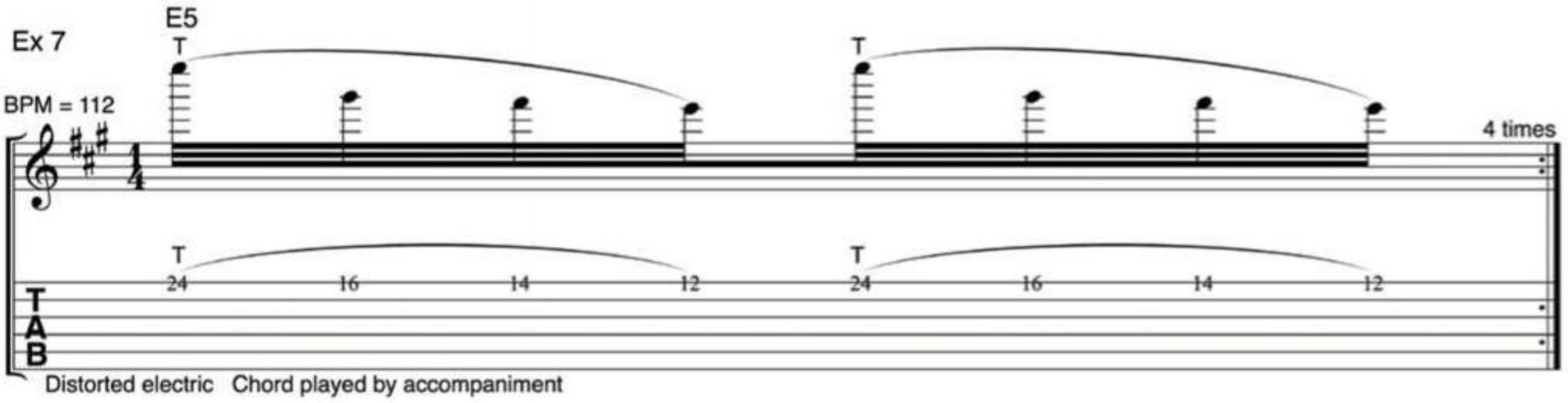
7 VAI'S TAPPING TECHNIQUE

1/4 TIME

Like many guitarists of his generation, Steve Vai was Inspired by Eddie Van Halen's genre-changing technique of fretting-hand tapping on the fretboard – as heard most notably towards the end of EVH's famous instrumental *Eruption*, in which he taps the highest note in groups of three repeated notes. Vai takes the tapping approach one step further in *Erotic Nightmare* at 1:05 by tapping a repeated pattern of four notes, similar to the exercise drawn out below. This exercise uses the root, second, third and octave of the E major scale, played in descending reverse order starting with the tapped note high E on the top string at the 24th fret.

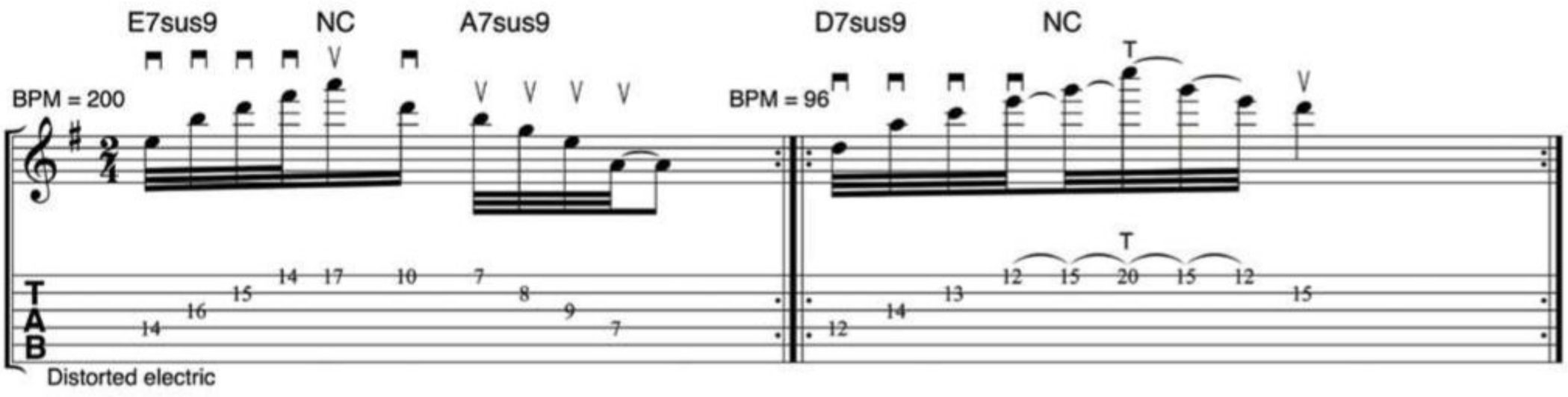


8 SWEEP PICKING 7SUS9 SHAPE

2/4 TIME

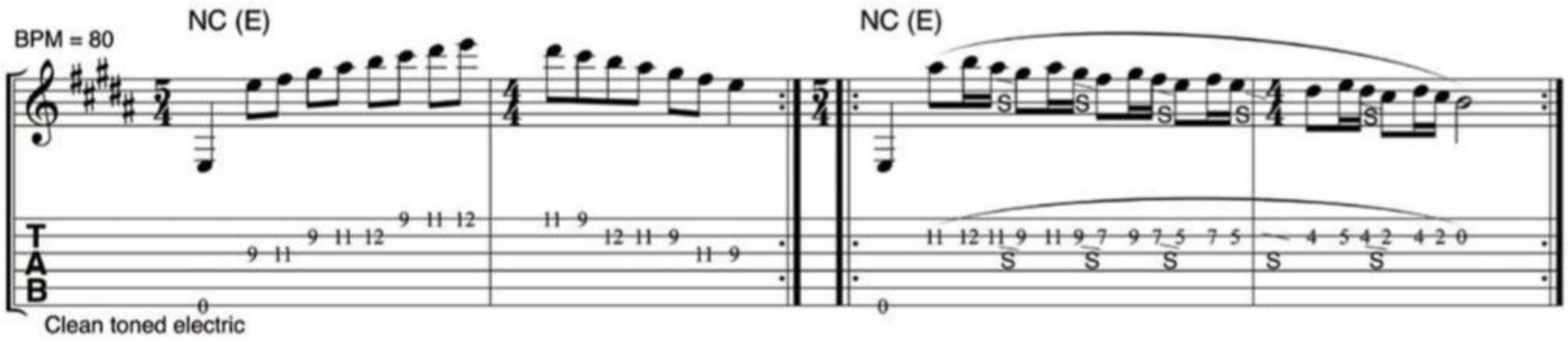
Sweep picking – with the plectrum 'sweeping' or 'brushing' through the strings in a continuous up or down stroke – is a classic Steve Vai manoeuvre. One note is sounded on each string, and the fretting hand fingers lift one at time at the exact same moment that the next note is struck, so that only one note is heard at a time. Sweep picking enables arpeggios to be played very quickly on the guitar, but they have to be played accurately in order to sound effective.

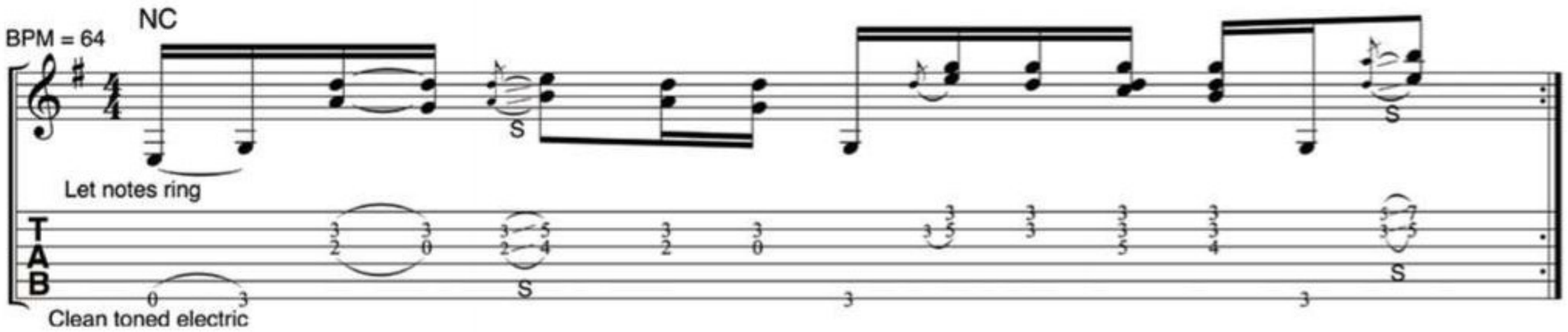
The exercise is based on a 7sus9 shape that Vai has used a various points in his career, not just on *Passion & Warfare*. The first bar is based on the patterns used by Vai in *For The Love Of God* at 4:08. The second bar combines this shape with a hammer-on and a tap on the top string, similar to a phrase in *The Animal* at 1:25. As ever with these tricky techniques, start slowly and accurately, then gradually work up to speed.

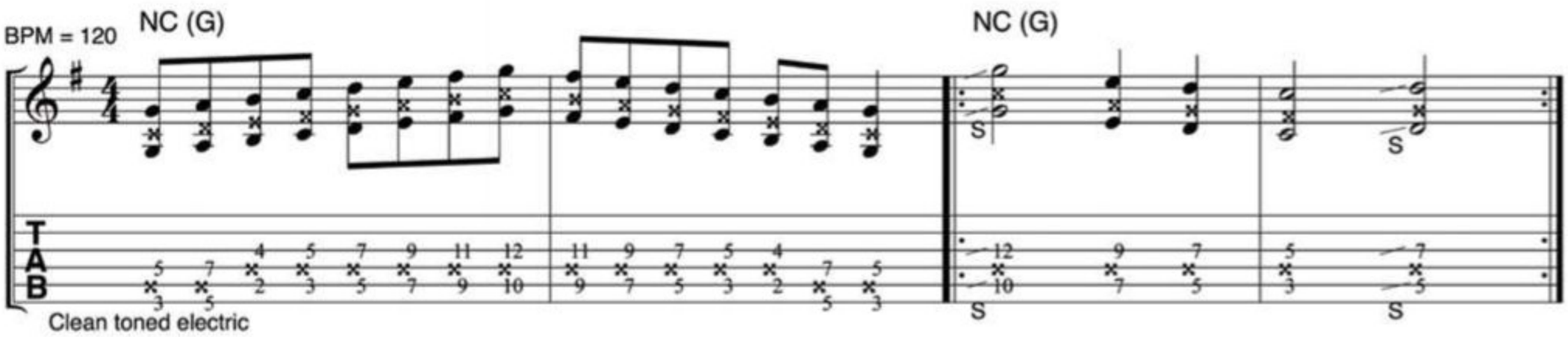


9 USING THE LYDIAN MODE

5/4 TIME

Vai is a highly musically literate guitarist with an extensive knowledge of theory, and one of his favourite scales is the Lydian mode. This is formed by starting any major scale on the fourth note of the scale and continuing to the same note, say, one or two octaves higher. So, if you take the B major scale (B C# D# E F# G# A# B) and start it on the E note, you create the E Lydian mode (E F# G# A# B C# D# E). Bars 1 and 2 show a one-octave E Lydian mode, with the bottom E at the start allowed to ring on underneath the scale to retain the sense of tonal centre. Bars 3 and 4 show a technique similar to that used by Vai in *The Riddle* at 0:09 – he descends the second string using the E Lydian mode via a series of hammer-ons, pull-offs and slides. In this exercise, only the first high note is plucked.

10 JIMI HENDRIX CHORD MELODY STYLE — 4/4 TIME

Vai bases much of *Sisters* on the 'chord melody' style of playing much used by Jimi Hendrix – particularly for the intro of the classic *Little Wing* from *1967's Axis: Bold As Love*. This involves playing both chord and melody at the same time – often involving consecutive chord fragments in which one part or 'voice' will change (the melody) and the other notes will stay the same (the accompaniment). This exercise explores some of the ideas, similar to approaches used by Vai throughout *Sisters*.

11 PLAYING IN OCTAVES — 4/4 TIME

Inspired by Jimi Hendrix and jazz pioneer Wes Montgomery, Vai often uses octaves in his lead parts and solos, as can be heard in *Sisters* starting at 2:11. Bars 1 and 2 below show a one-octave G major scale. The 'x's mean you should damp notes by lightly touching with the fretting hand's first finger, which is holding down the lower of the two notes. Bars 3 and 4 show a phrase using the G major scale in octaves. You can play this with a pick, as Hendrix did, or Montgomery-style with the thumb. Vai uses both techniques.

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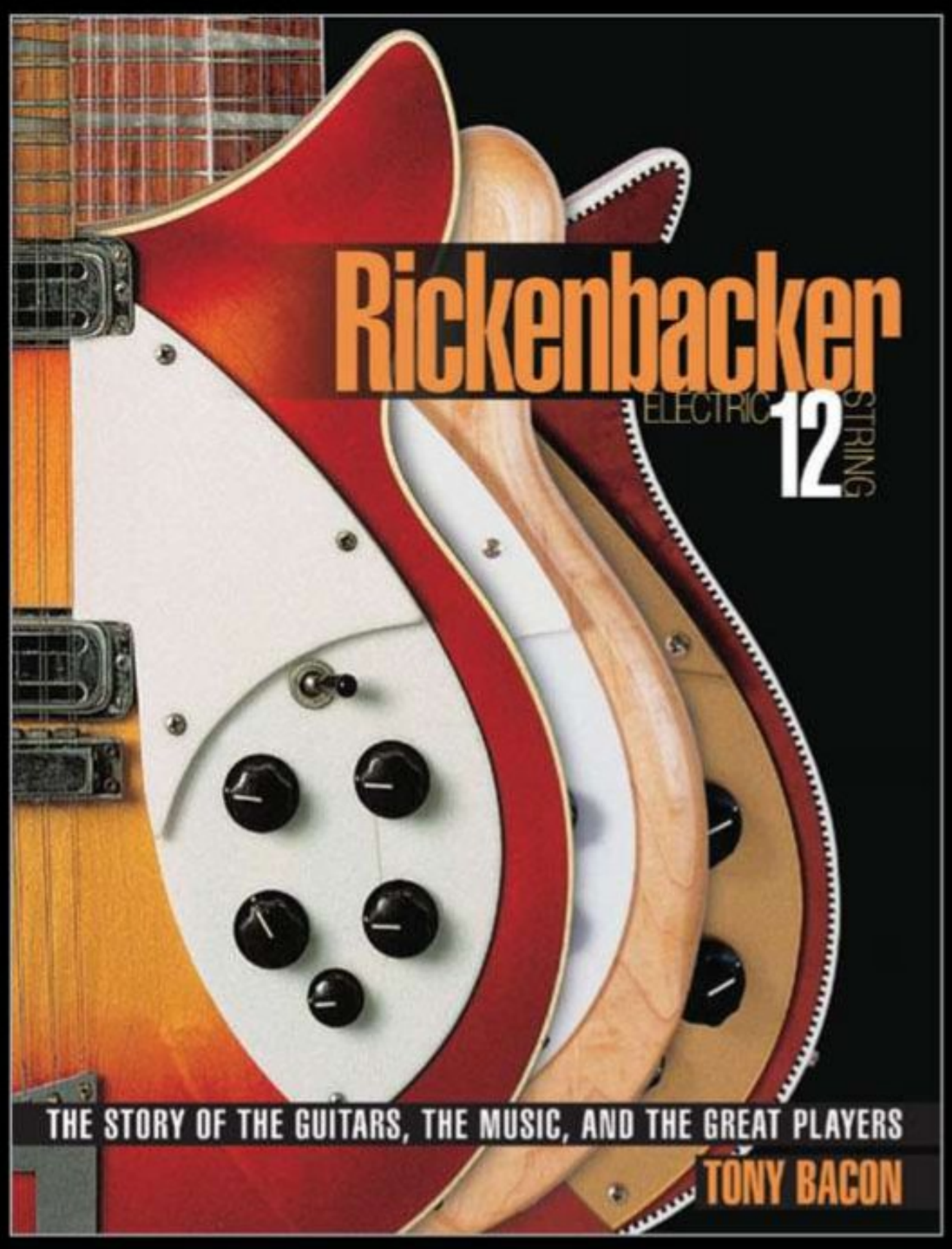

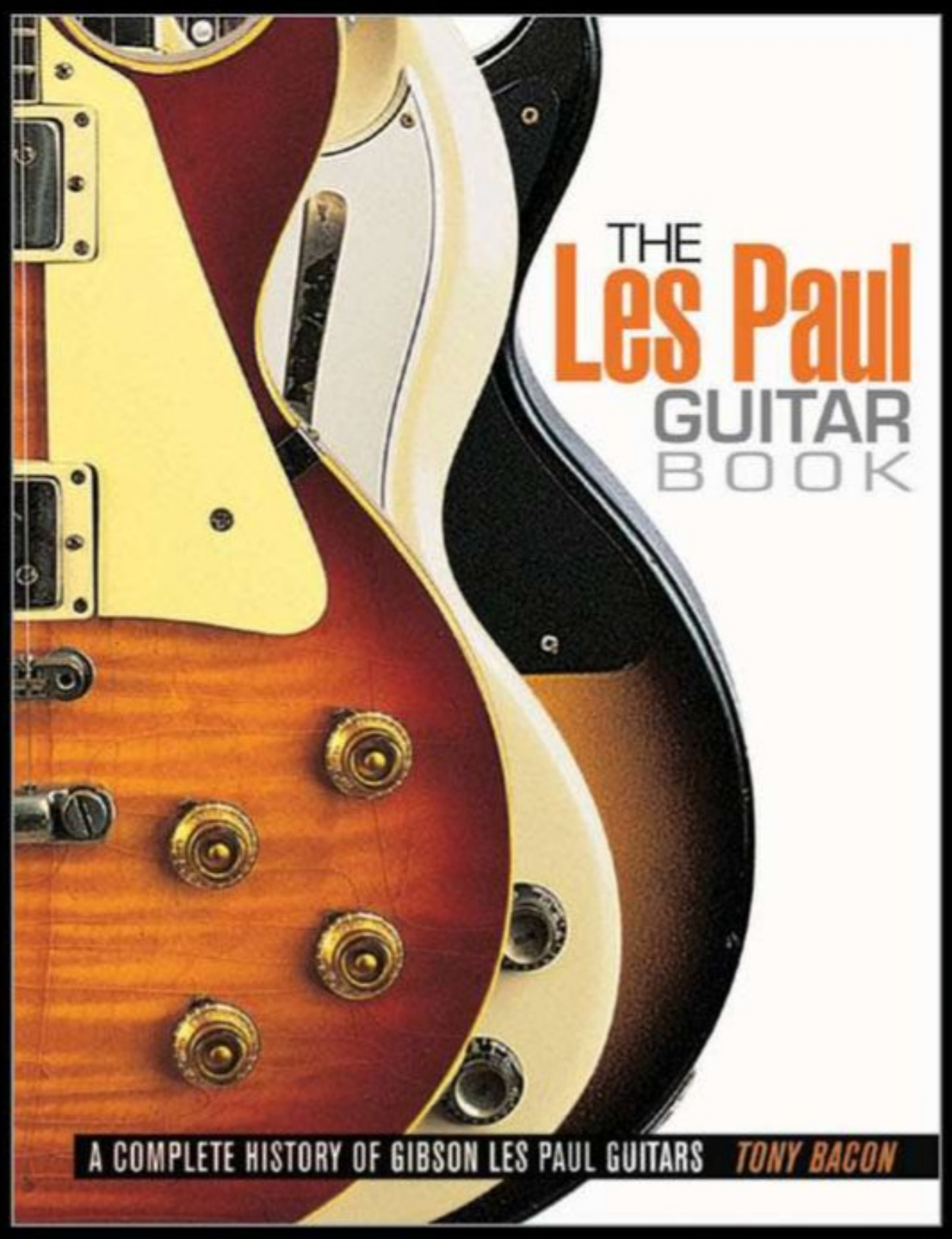

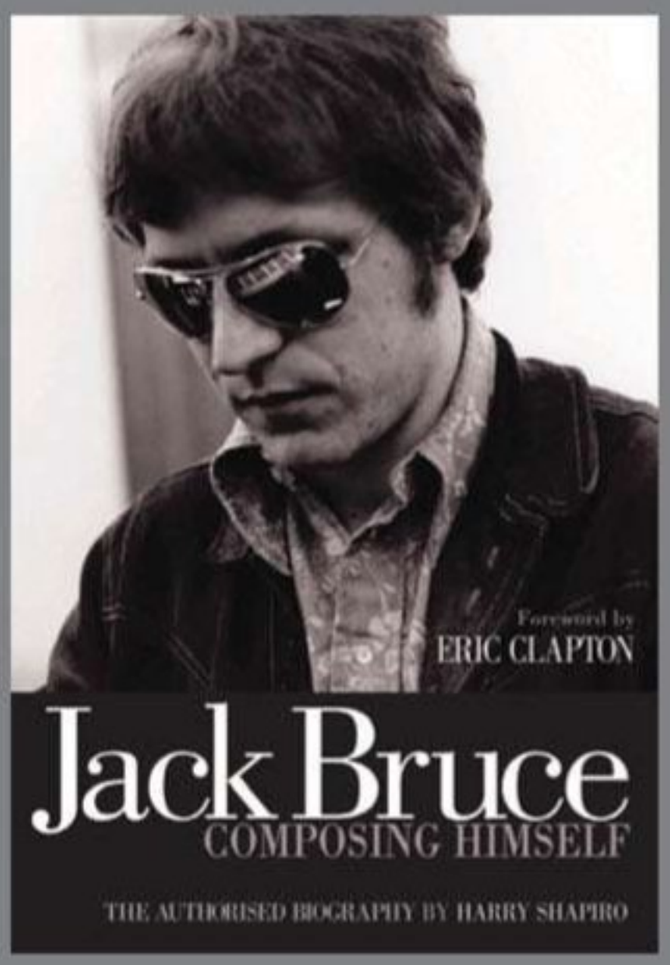

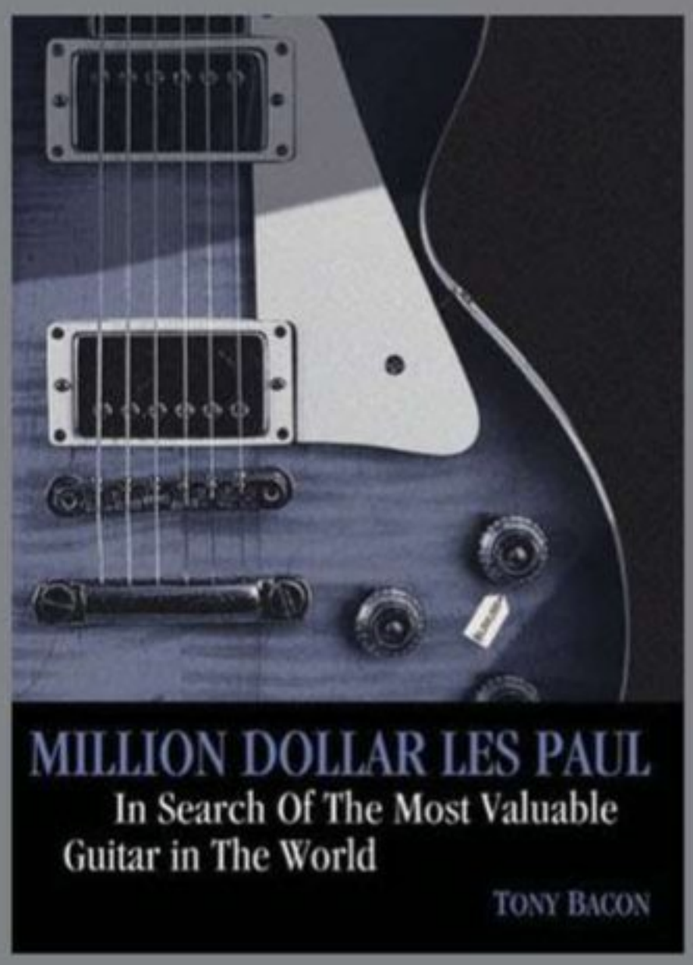

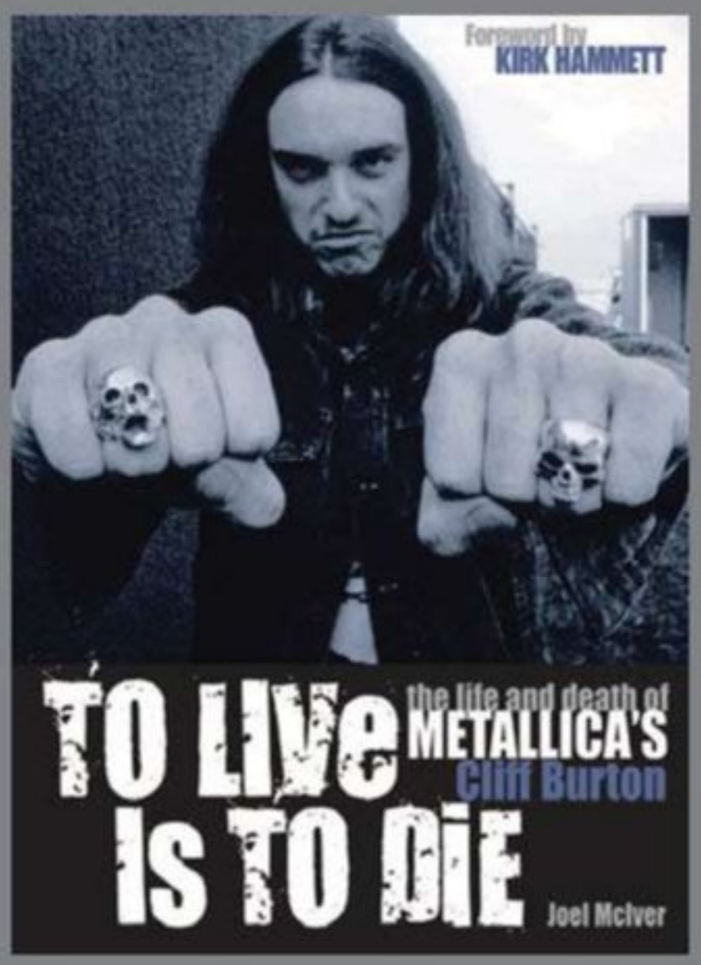

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BASS TECHNIQUES

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PLAY LIKE

Roger Glover

A classic rock album and a heavy metal cornerstone, Deep Purple's *Machine Head* contains some super-fine work from bassist Roger Glover. Gareth Morgan has his headphones on

When Deep Purple convened in Montreux in Switzerland to record a new album in December 1971, they could have no idea that it would eventually come to be regarded as their greatest work. *Machine Head* was their sixth studio album, and the third by the venerated 'Mark II' Purple line-up. It also contained their most enduring song, and the bane of music shop proprietors the world over – *Smoke On The Water*. However, as the lyrics to relate, it's an album that came very close to not being recorded.

The venue chosen by the band to record in, the Casino in Montreux, was set on fire during a matinee performance by Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention when someone fired a flare gun into the ceiling. The band re-located to the Pavilion hotel, only to be evicted after recording the backing track that was to become *Smoke On The Water* – there was no soundproofing, and the police were swiftly convened. Finally, with the help of casino owner and organiser of the famous Montreux Jazz Festival, Claude Nobs, they ended up at the Grand Hotel with the Rolling Stones mobile studio and set about writing and recording what would be their masterwork.

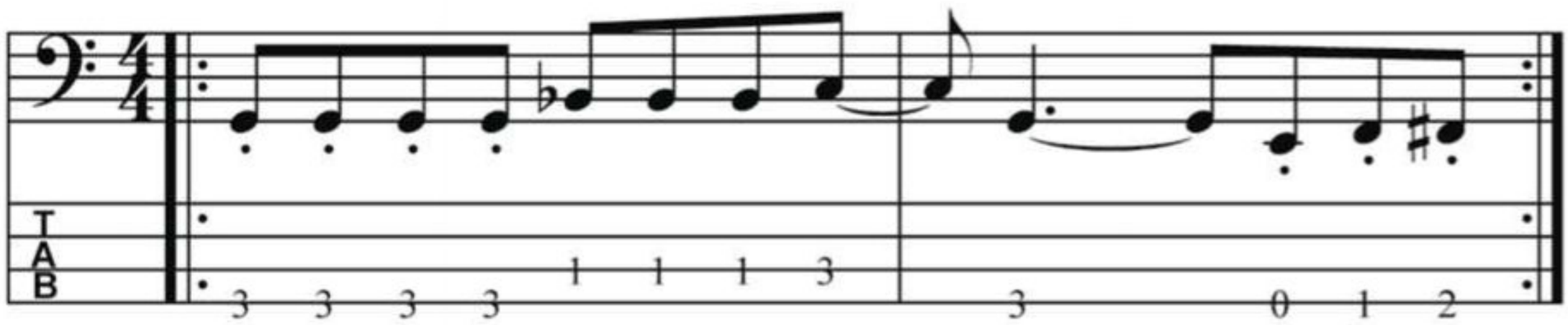
Although Deep Purple had long been regarded as highly accomplished musicians, Roger Glover was, and still is, a criminally underrated bass player. Together with singer Ian Gillan, Glover joined Purple in 1969 and after the fire and brimstone of *In Rock* (1970) and the more experimental *Fireball* (1971) he began work on *Machine Head*, which in many ways represents the culmination of their influence on the band. Glover really shines on this album, seemingly relishing being cooped-up in a deserted hotel in Switzerland in the middle of winter with inadequate heating.

Wielding his trusty black Rickenbacker 4001 with pick in hand, Glover is far more melodically inventive than you'd expect of a rock bassist, providing the secondary melody behind Gillan's vocal on songs like *Highway Star* and at certain times seeming to compete for soloing space with guitar or keyboards. Groove-wise, he's super-solid, dealing with the challenging tempos on *Lazy* and *Pictures Of Home* with ease, and on the latter song delivering a memorable, inventive bass break that's you'll find a bit of a nightmare to get your fingers around.

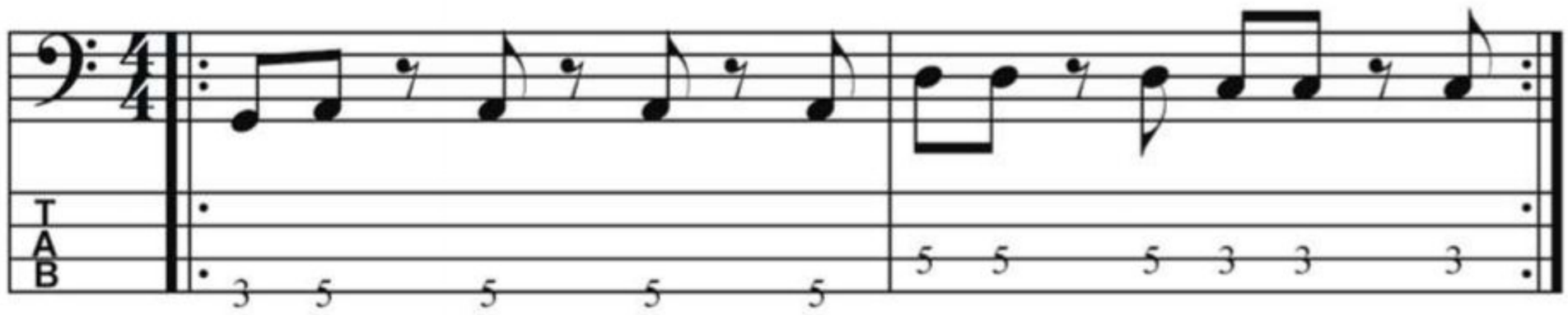
If you thought that rock bass was all about chugging away on root notes, listen to Roger Glover on *Machine Head* and be enlightened.

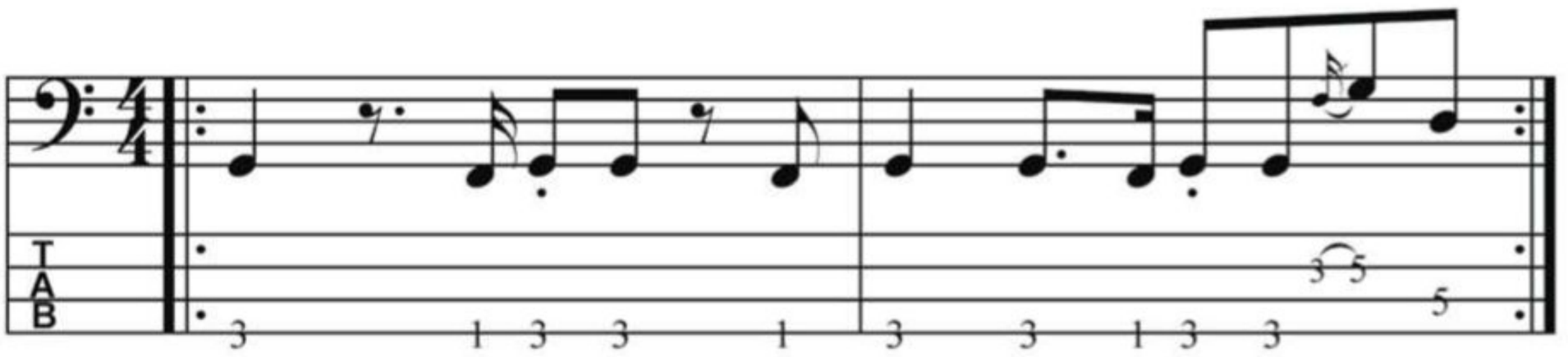
1 CONTROLLED EIGHTH NOTES WITH CHROMATIC APPROACH — 4/4 TIME

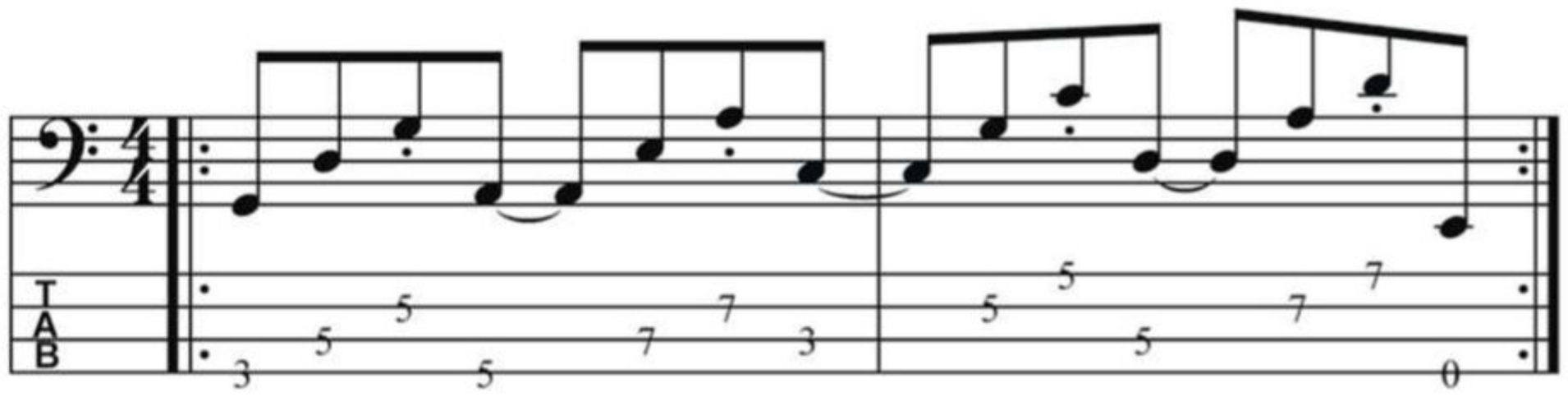
Though Glover loves melodies and fills, he also holds down a basic rocking eighth-note pattern when the song needs it. *Smoke On The Water* has a wandering melodic bass part under Ritchie Blackmore's solo but the majority of the bassline is fairly static. This first example will get you close, although we've included a standard bluesy chromatic lick and a reversal of the chord change.



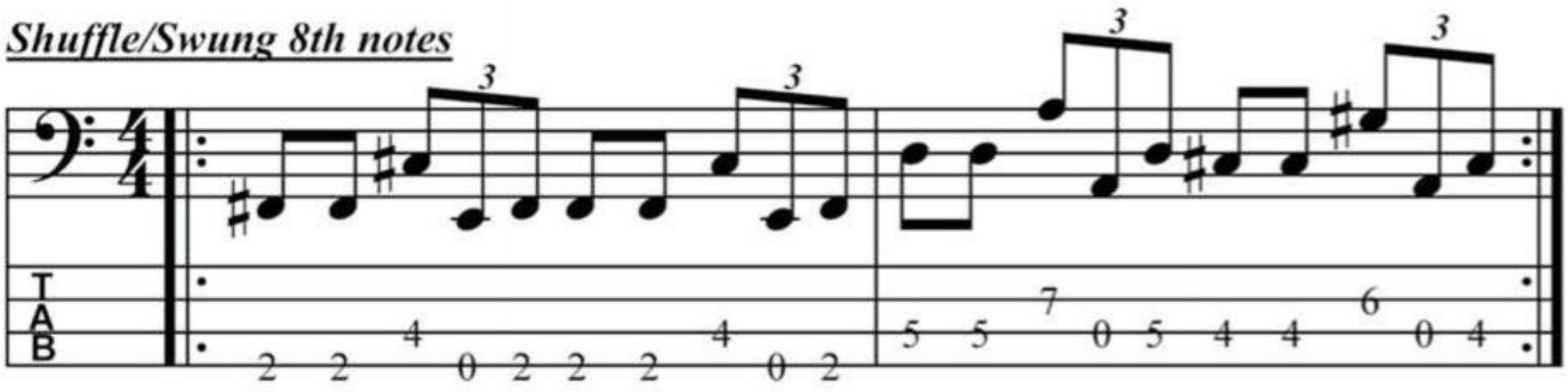
2 OFFBEAT ANGLE — 4/4 TIME

Most studio versions of Deep Purple's songs were fairly disciplined; if they ran to any serious length, there was a good reason for it. Live, it was a different matter: songs like *Space Truckin'*, a five-minute rocker on *Machine Head*, could extend to nearly 20 minutes (check out the *Made In Japan* live LP for just such a version). Glover underpins *Space Truckin'* with another controlled eighth-note part, this time with a broken offbeatpattern, and manages to make this simple idea feel rather funky.

3 BALLAD WITH SIMPLE FILL — 4/4 TIME

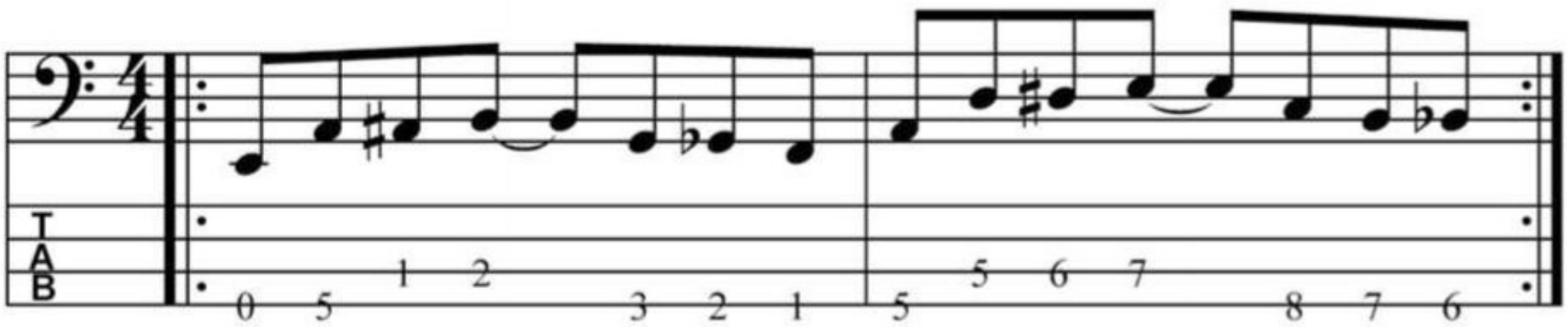
One song from the Montreux sessions that didn't make it onto the album, *When A Blind Man Cries*, is thankfully included on more recent versions. It's one of the better rock ballads, with singer Ian Gillan in tortured-soul mode and Blackmore at his most understated and bluesiest, with volume-knob seagull cries on the intro and soulful fills that echo David Gilmour. For his part, Glover concentrates on holding it down and maintaining forward motion with an approach so laid-back that it could quite easily grind to a halt.

4 ROOT-FIFTH-OCTAVE THROUGH CHORD CHANGE — 4/4 TIME

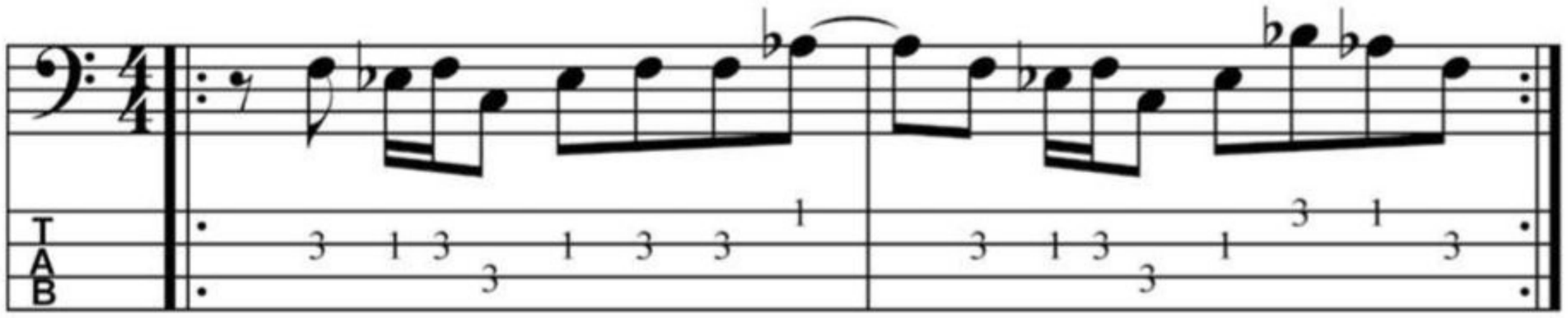
***Highway Star* opens the *Machine Head* album (and for many years was also the live set opener) and, given it was written in the back of a tour bus in October 1971, it's probably one of Deep Purple's best. It's got everything: searing tempo, classic Gillan vocal, singable chorus hook and superbly constructed guitar and organ solos over a chord sequence that Blackmore has admitted he nicked off JS Bach. Glover is on top form, wandering melodically through bridge and chorus sections, which include a passage similar to this.**

5 SHUFFLE PART WITH TRIPLETS — 4/4 TIME

There are two fast shuffle-based songs on *Machine Head*: *Lazy*, almost a standard blues with fantastic work from both Blackmore and Jon Lord on Hammond organ, and *Pictures Of Home*, a rockier affair. Glover handles both effortlessly, adding some appropriate walking ideas to *Lazy* and a quirkier triplet-based approach to *Pictures Of Home*. It's the latter that we've based this fifth example on.

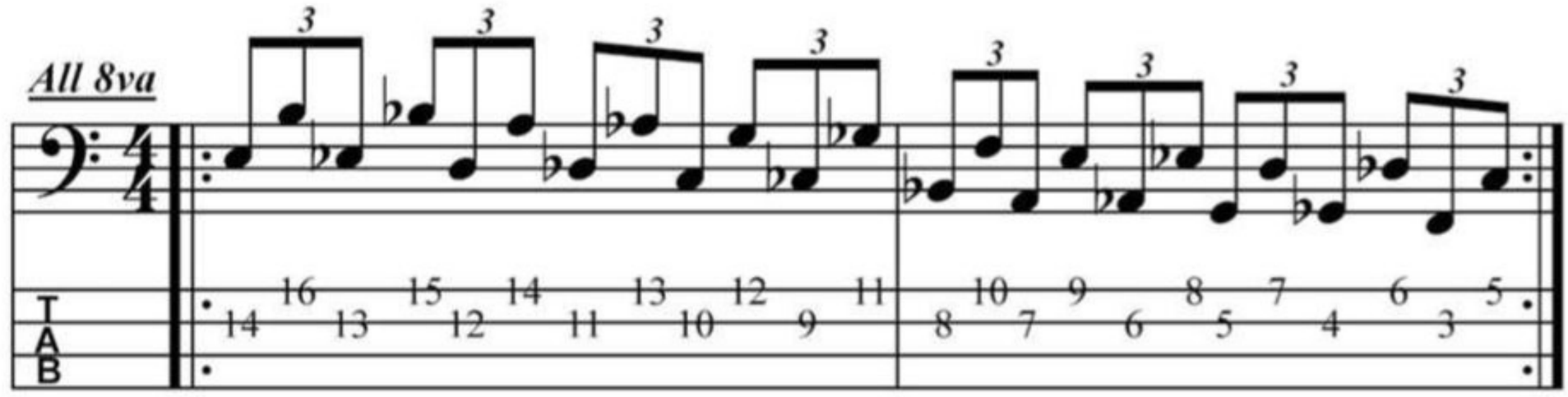


6 CHROMATIC EIGHT-NOTE UNISON MELODY — 4/4 TIME

Purple were not averse to unison riffing: see *Black Night*, a huge hit single in 1970. There are plenty of organ/guitar unisons on *Machine Head*, including the classic riff to *Smoke On The Water*, and *Lazy*. Glover also gets involved in the action, and one notable example is the chorus part from *Space Truckin'*, a slippery chromatic affair that requires a bit of thought in the fretting hand department.

7 OFFBEAT MELODY — 4/4 TIME

***Maybe I'm A Leo* is the other example of guitar/bass/keyboards unison riffing on the album. It's a funky little figure, based on minor pentatonic ideas, that's used as intro, outro and as a bridge between verses. Our version is written in double time. The melody starts on beat two, and drummer Ian Paice plays a seriously twisted pattern that'll leave you questioning your own sanity.**

8 TRIPLET BASS BREAK — 4/4 TIME

Though Glover once said 'I've always had a bit of a complex about my bass playing', there are some bass solos on Deep Purple records – such as the nasty distorted break on *Fireball*, from the LP of the same name. On *Machine Head*, the second half of the *Pictures Of Home* solo is a feast of melody while the first half is an ascending root-fifth triplet lick much like this. Take your time: it's tough to execute at tempo.



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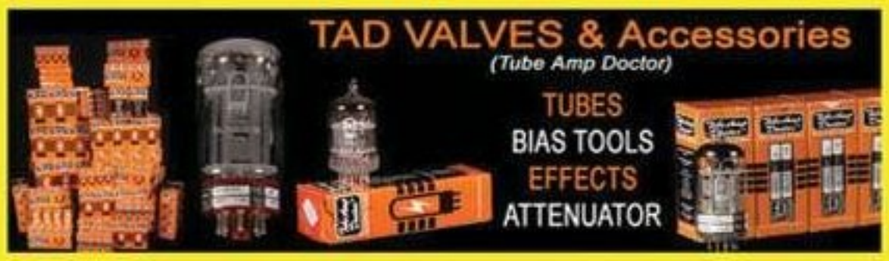

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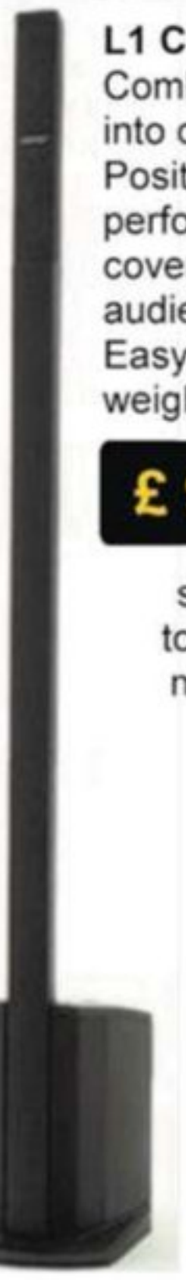

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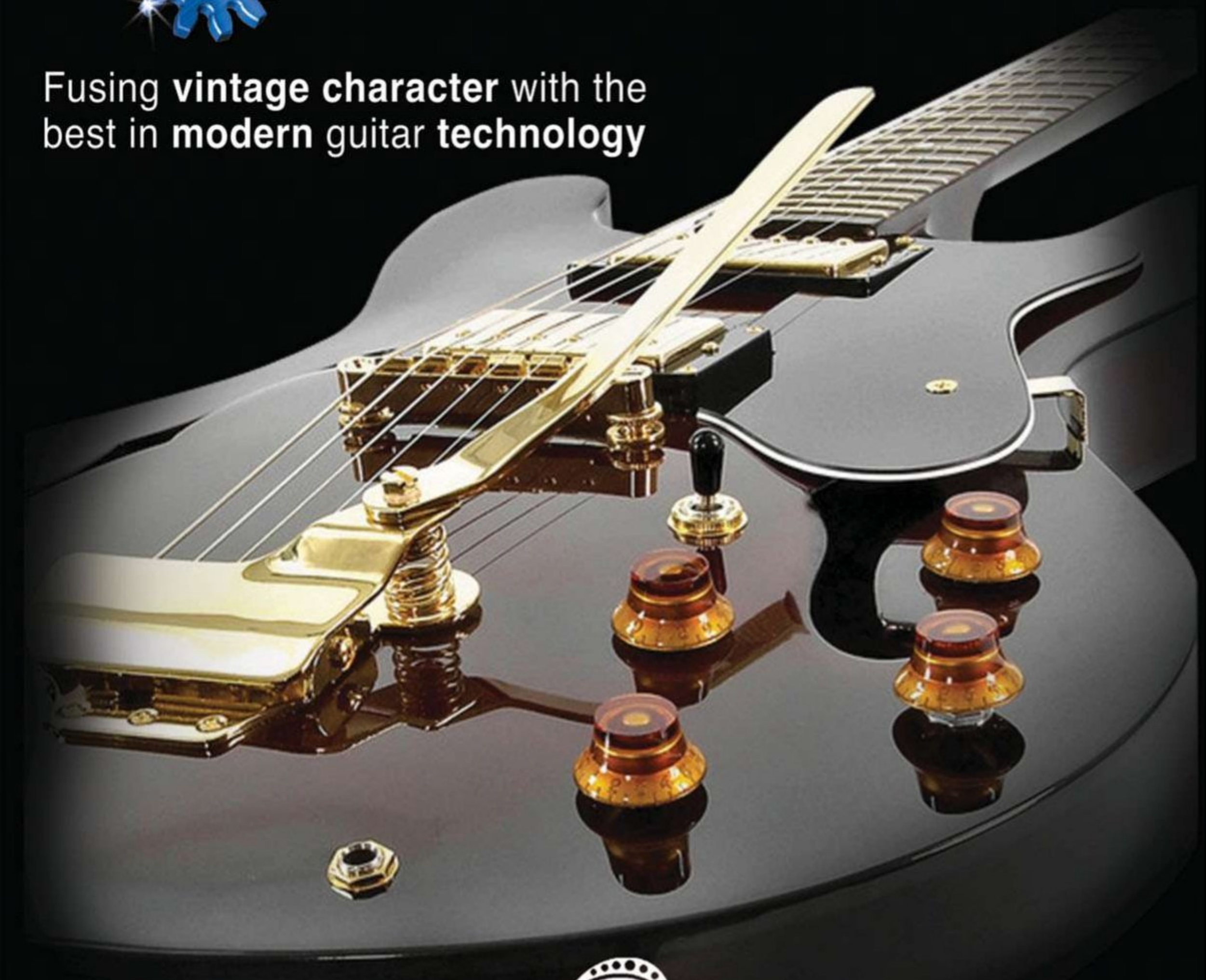

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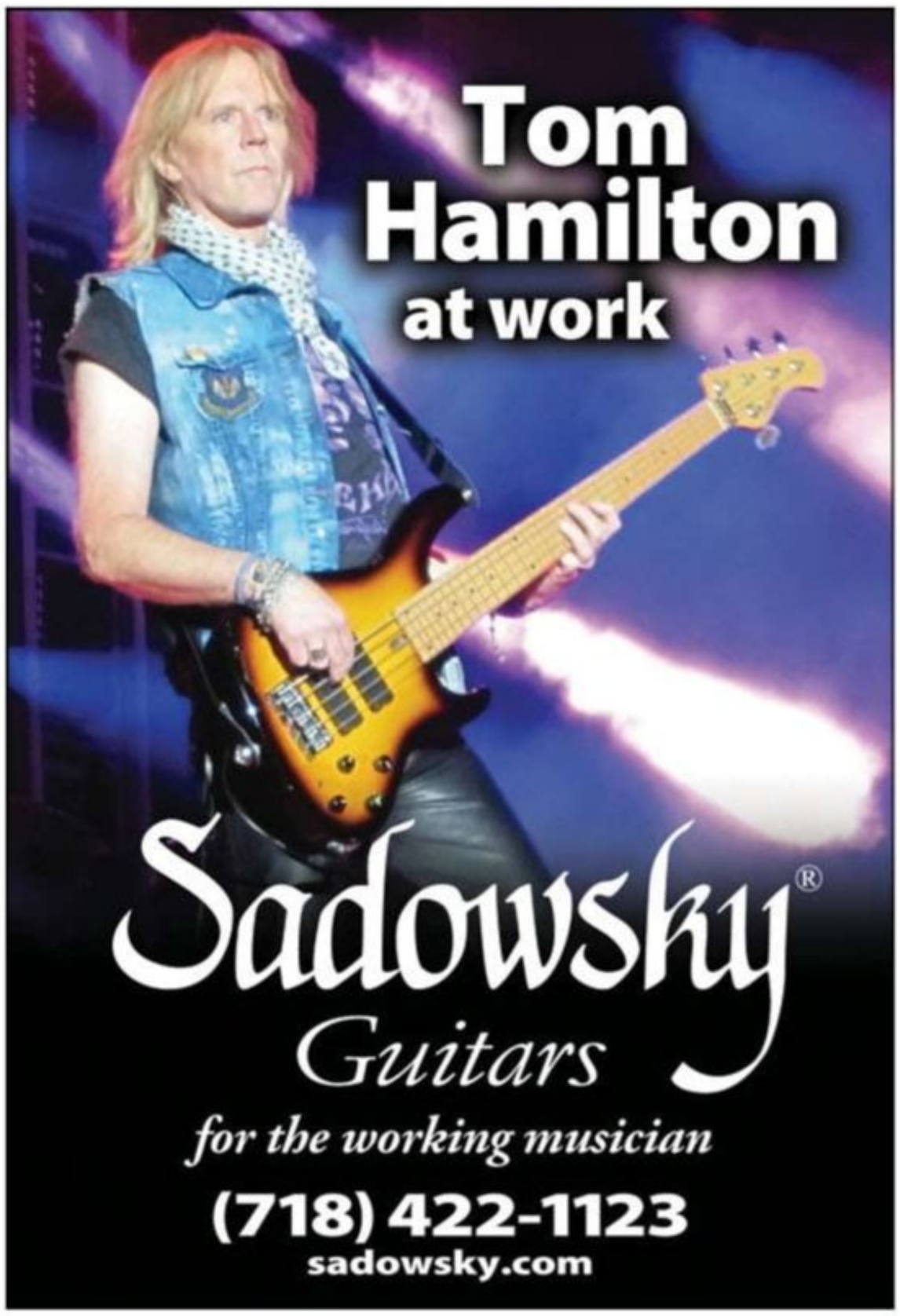

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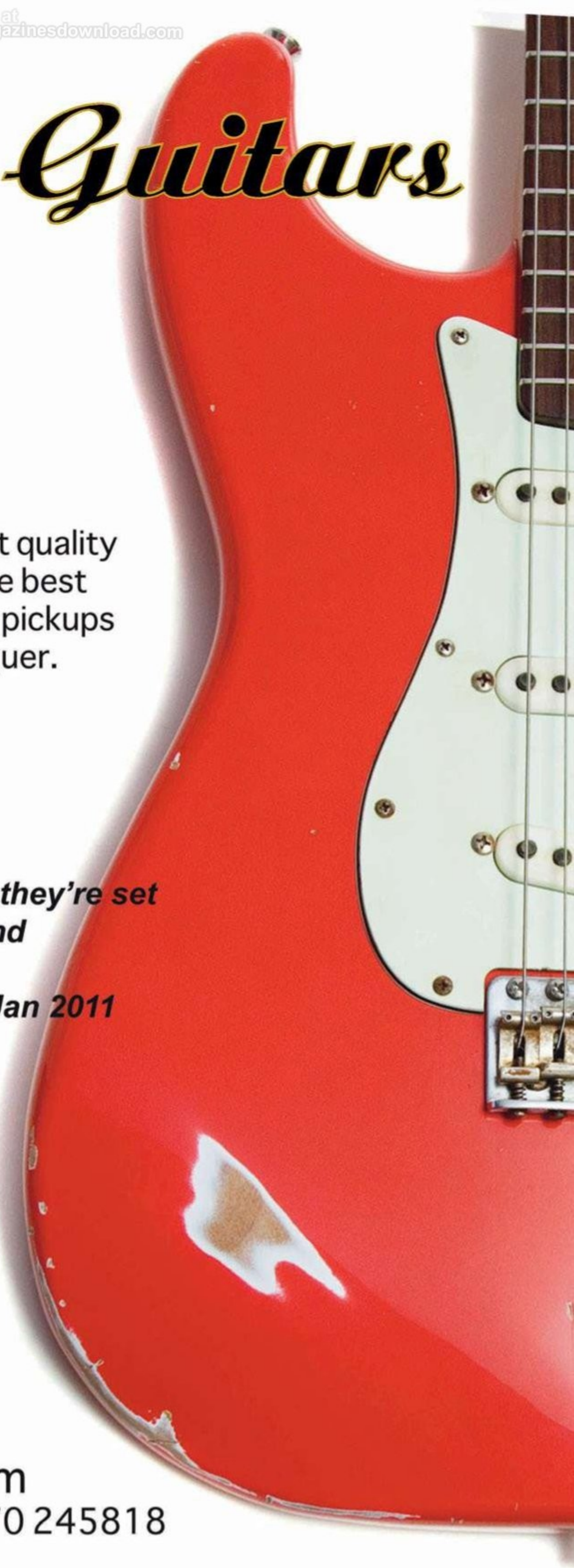

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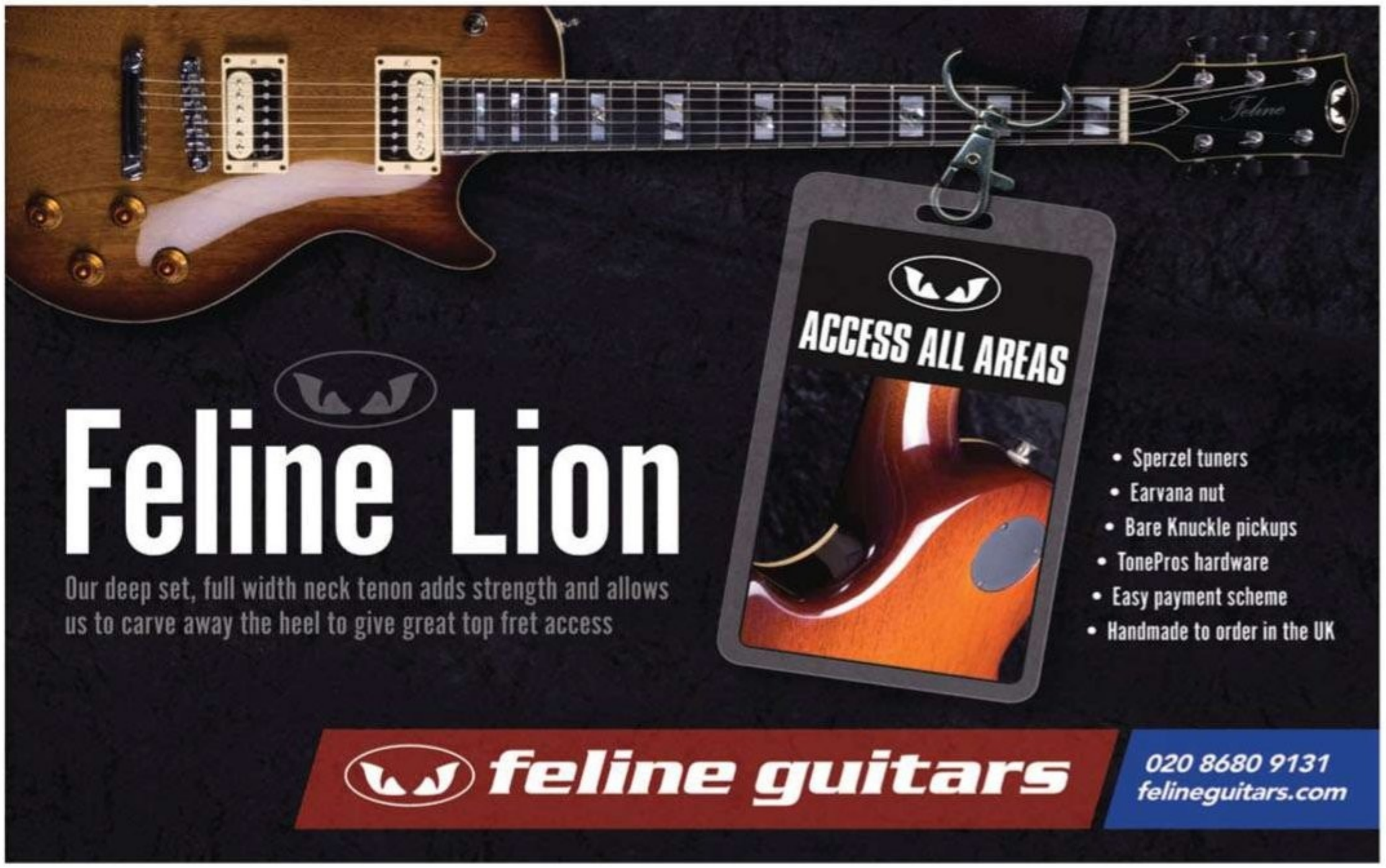

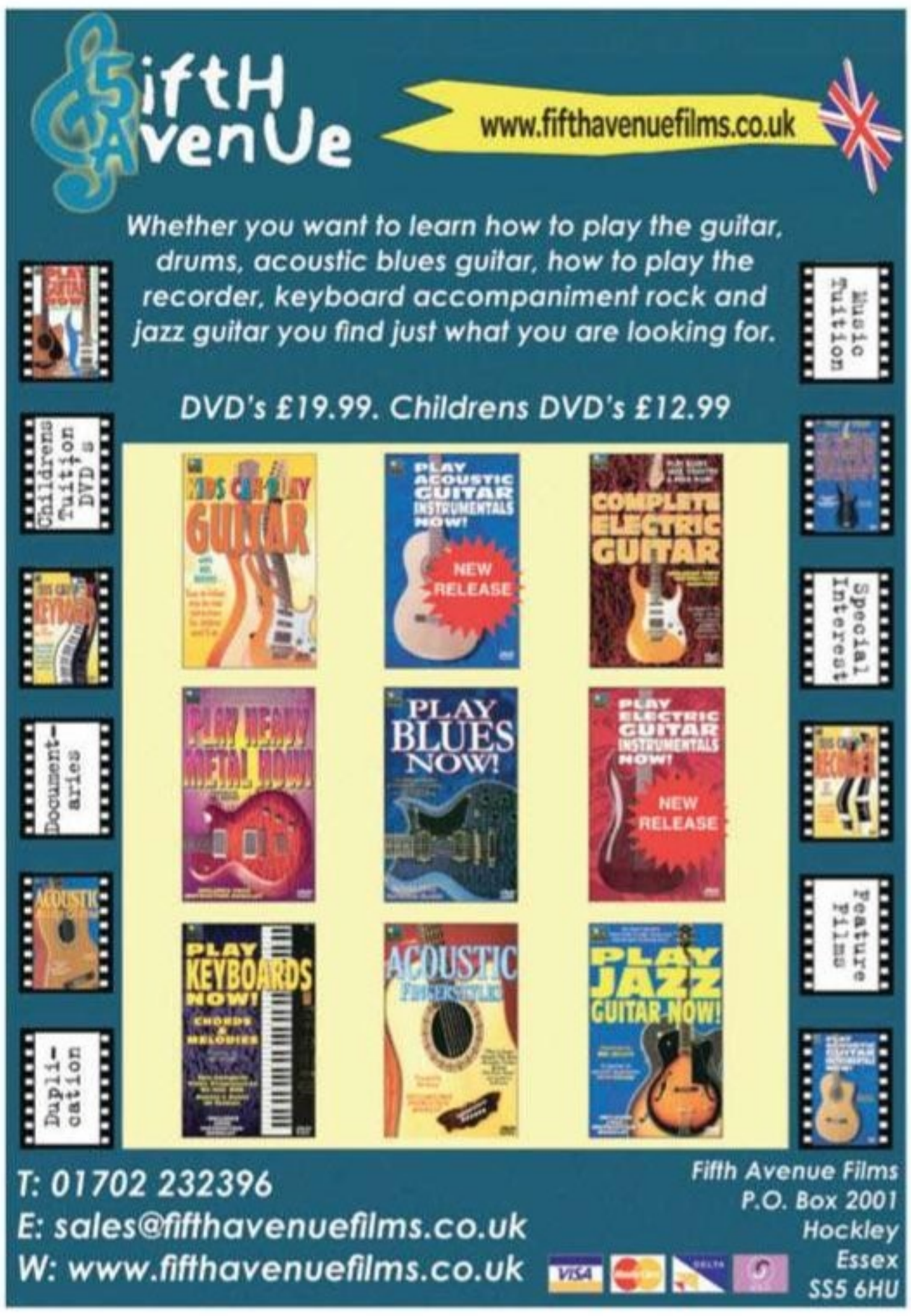

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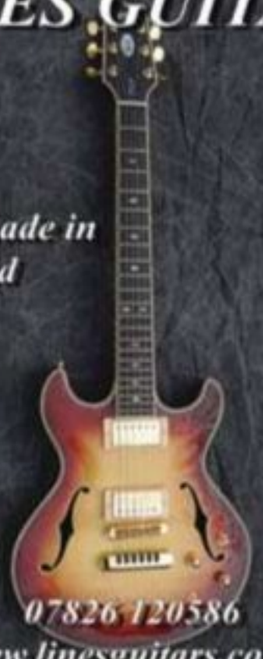
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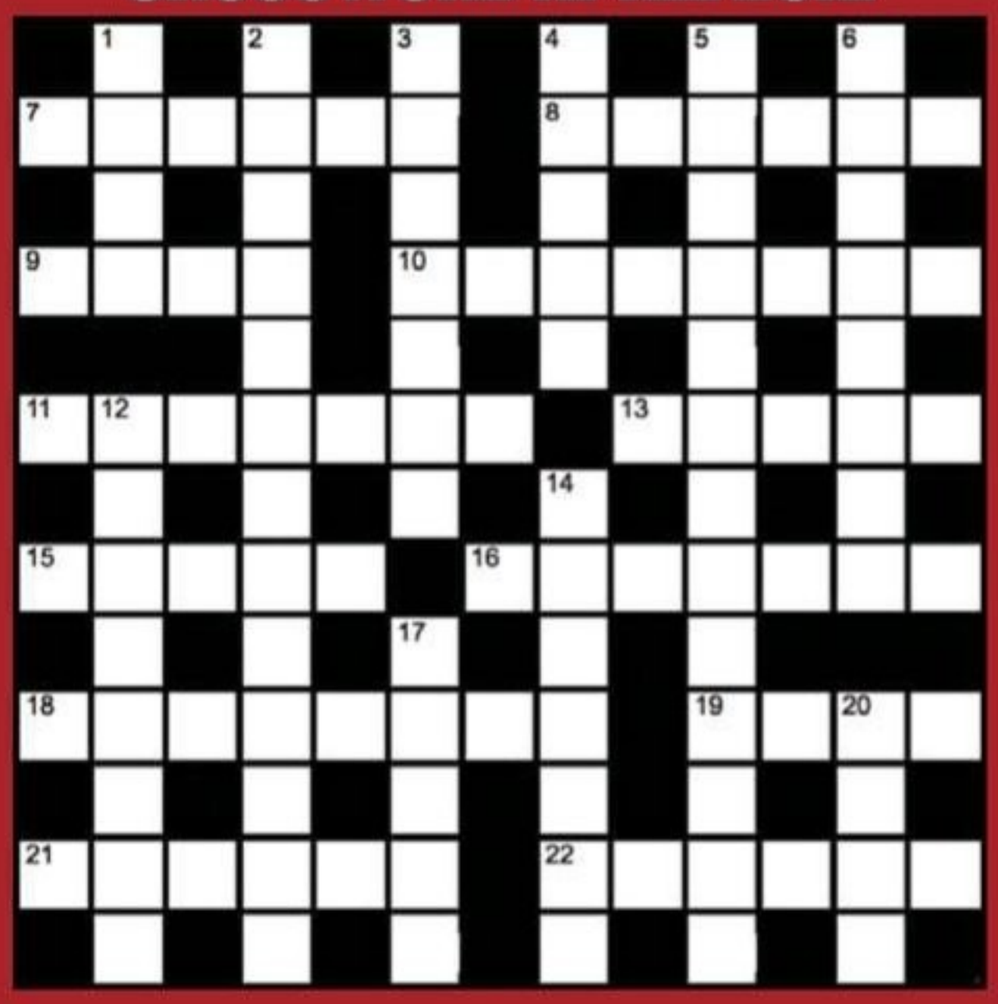

ACROSS

7. Johnny – blues player for season? (6)

8. Jazz player Martin ____ (MBE) (6)

9. We hear half goat is brown (4)

10. I said sly form makes kidney substitute (8)

11. Accuse goblin for everyone (7)

13. Acknowledge let in (5)

15. Adam makes guitars without light (5)

16. Status Quo did it all over the world (7)

18. As in tiny madness (8)

19. Information from all points of the compass (4)

21. Confirmed editor after volume (6)

22. Southern Herts town - normally one of six (6)

DOWN

1. Travel permitted with cash card (4)

2. Let any slacker turn into jazz bassist (7,6)

3. Steve _____ (OCS / Paul Weller) (7)

4. Guitar part first rate (5)

5. Pronounced Southern rockers (6,7)

6. Choice of violin to mix-up (8)

12. Can Lemon make Louisianan guitars? (8)

14. Imitator from cosy pit (7)

17. Valve to colour verse we hear (5)

20. Little Hendrix song on Flying V? (4)

Tokai Explorer, £200. Jackson PC3, EMG pickups, amber, £495. Ashdown Peacemaker 20W, all valve, £200. Bass starter pack with amp, £100. Session Rocket, £30. 01491 833 671, Oxfordshire

Fender Squier Stratocaster, red, maple neck, new vintage pickups, Japanese Fuji-gen plant circa 1993-94, hard case, very good condition, £265 ono. Tel 07753 224 395 Wirral area. Email: timbrett48@gmail.com

George Harriso- style rosewood solidbody. Black scratchplate, Hot Rail pickups, new tweed case, good condition £475 ono. Tel 07753 224 395 wirral area. Email: timbrett48@gmail.com

Boss ME50, as new with original packaging and manual, £99. Tel Julian 01962 732 036, Hampshire

Boss Blues Driver, £35. Danelectro Echo Delay, £35. Ibanez compressor, £15. Zoom 1010 multi-FX, £35. Vox overdrive, £15. All boxed and include P&P. Tel 01492 534 226

Matchless 8x12 Custom cabinets (pair), Mark Sampson era, half open/closed back, Matchless Special Design Vintage 30s, flightcased, vgc, £750 each. Steve 07774 696003 steviejim@yahoo.com, London

Fender Telecaster, 1977, black, rosewood neck, superb guitar, bought in LA in 2005. Plays, sounds, looks the business. Rare black-on-black model. £1695 ono. Tel: Richard 07727 624 039, Barnsley

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Fender American Telecaster Standard, natural ash body, rosewood neck, Fender hardcase, mint condition £600. 07510 645367, Sheffield

Epiphone Standard electric guitar, £180 ono, as new, includes gig bag. Tel 07846 159029, South London

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Danelectro Longhorn Guitar, black, £160. Washburn J3 guitar, tobacco, £160. Epiphone SG guitar, £70. Peavey Audition 25W amp, £45. All very good condition. Tel Steven 07954 138553 or 01772 492 566

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Fender 60th Anniversary USA Strat with Fender solid case, not gigged, offers and buyers contact John, Tel: 01284 701479, Suffolk

VHT Pitbull CL50 heads, pair. Both mint condition, never gigged, superb tone, two years old, very reluctant sale, £750 each. Tel Dave, 07966 196463, Cheltenham

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Fender Cyber Deluxe 65W modelling amp, built in effects and tuner, 64 programs, 4 button footswitch, light home use only, £275 ono. Tel: 01283 810 158, Staffs

Hiscox hard case for Les Paul, excellent condition, £50. Orange Crush PiX 35LDX amp, £140. Peavey Vyper15 amp, £55, both as new, hardly used with boxes. Chris 07545 330 053 or cjbtrek@btinternet.com, Northampton

Behringer 500W PA system, complete with 10-ch powered mixer, two 800W speakers and stands, three dynamic mic stands and cables, excellent condition, £425 ovno. Tel: Dave 07842 279 296.

Fender Jaguar Bass, 2006, CIJ, Hotrod Red with matching headstock, only available in USA, virtually unplayed, £650, email garrol@btinternet.com, tel: 07970 997 271

ORANGE 4x12 cab, 1970s, four Rola/Celestion G12Hs, very solid but poorly painted black back in the day, sounds great with anything, £300. Tel: Steve 07774 696 003, London

Boss OD-20 twin overdrive/ distortion pedal, used but vg condition with box and manual, £90. Tel: Phil 07951 951 431, Bromley

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Martin EB18, 1979, rare electric bass, excellent condition, OHSC, Cambridge area, £950. Contact keithday@Ntlworld.com or call 01223 247 639

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PRS SE Santana limited edition, black cherry, including PRS hardcase, only 100 made worldwide, mint condition, home use only, £590. Tel: 07702 011 982 or 01702 219 768

Cornell Romany 2x10 20W amp £1200, Fender Flame guitar 1984, £850 ono, redundancy forces sale. Tel: 07973 187 375

Hofner 500/1 Violin Bass, 50th Anniversary Edition #33/50, solid carved top, luxury fitted case with hygrometer/humistat, plus fitted flightcase, all mint, boxed, £1850. Tel: Steve 07774 696 003, London.

Crossword answers

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Epiphone Noel Gallagher Union Jack, call Steve, 07803 116060, kayst.fencing@ntlworld.com, Bedfordshire

Bass cab to match Selmer Treble & Bass 50, scruffy okay but must work and cheap. Tel: Tony, 07691 655 481

Bass badge for 1963 Vox AC30, Tel: Mark, 07910 374457

Fender USA '62 reissue Strat. Tel: 01992 462640 or email r.hill3@sky.com

Danelectro Corned Beef reverb, call Mel, 01986 782 383

Bass starter pack with amp wanted, £100 tops. Tel: Oliver, 07913 625193, Pinder

Arbiter d/c Gibson or SG Jr, Peavey Classic 100W head. Tel: Stef 07736 046937

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BACKSTAGE

Did you know, in the month of April...

April 1975 ... Leo Fender is made president of bold new guitars manufacturers Music Man.

When Leo's contract with Fender - which he sold to CBS in 1965 - finally expired, he immediately got together with ex-Fender employees Forrest White and Tom Walker to take his original designs further. Music Man's first instruments were the StingRay guitar and bass. The six-string (pictured right) featured twin humbuckers and a bolt-on neck, and the bass is generally considered to be the first production model to boast active pickups. Leo, restless as ever, left Music Man a few short years later in 1979 to form G&L.

1975 ... Ron Wood replaces Mick Taylor in the Rolling Stones

Wood reveals in his biography *Rock On Wood* that he missed out on the job back in '69 after Brian Jones left. When Jagger rang and asked him if he'd like to join he thought it was prank and told Mick he was 'busy'.

1958 ... Buddy Holly has his Stratocaster stolen

Buddy and The Crickets were on the Alan Freed's Big Beat Tour at the time and luckily he had a back-up - although that was also stolen from the band's station wagon a week later in St Louis, Missouri. Fortunately Fender did the decent thing, and an endorsement deal followed.

1976 ... The Ramones release their self-titled debut album – and there's not one guitar solo on it

Johnny Ramone's fierce riffage on his Ventures II Mosrite - bought for $50 from Manny's in New York - along with his band's tales of teenage boredom and mental illness were the driving force behind the punk rock explosion. The first LP featured 14 songs - including *Blitzkrieg Bop* and *I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend* - and ran for less than half an hour. The band made no impact in the US but were revered in Britain and across Europe from the very beginning. In a *New York Times* poll The Ramones' debut was voted one of the Top 20 most influential albums, rubbing shoulders with Miles Davis and Elvis.

1975 ... Blackmore quits Deep Purple

Angered at the funk influence brought in by Glen Hughes and David Coverdale, Blackmore denounced Purple's *Stormbringer* as 'crap', and left. He took control of recent support act Elf and renamed them Rainbow, eventually sacking all but singer Ronnie James Dio. Tommy Bolin replaced Blackmore in Deep Purple.

1959 ... Jimi Hendrix, 16, gets his first electric guitar

Jimi had owned a beaten-up old acoustic since he was 13, but his efforts to learn were hampered by its inability to stay in tune. The new white Supro Ozark improved matters greatly. Jimi would carry it around in a sack learning riffs from anyone he could find. Friends recall that the first song he learned to play from start to finish was *Tall Cool One* by The Fabulous Wailers.

1927 ... John Dopyera flies the patent for the National Tri-cone resonator

Three cones supplied the extra punch that meant the Hawaiian-style players could be heard within the bands of the era. Dopyera (below) quickly fell out with his employers at National and left to build a rival type of resonator, the Dobro, a year later.

1953 ... *Musical Merchandise* announces the arrival of Guild Guitars

A magazine ad stated that the company had been 'formed to manufacture high-quality guitars, including Spanish and Hawaiian electric - solidbody electrics, amplifiers, cases and strings.' The brainchild of George Mann and his friend Al Dronge, Guild described itself as 'the Stradivari of guitars' and built a limited run of flat-top acoustics and archtop electrics. By 1955, Mann had left and Dronge had taken the helm. Guilds have since graced the collections of John Lee Hooker, Eric Clapton, Buddy Guy and Ry Cooder, amongst many others.

1971 ... Eric Clapton plays on the Howlin' Wolf *London Sessions* album

Bill Wyman, Charlie Watts and Steve Winwood made up the rest of the band. A giant and imposing figure, the cantankerous bluesman was aggressive towards the young musicians, insisting they couldn't play his songs properly and even placing Clapton's fingers in the 'correct' place on the fretboard during the recording of *Little Red Rooster*. Already ill during the recording, the Wolf succumbed to kidney problems five years later, aged 65.

1982 ... Iron Maiden's *The Number Of The Beast*, hits the top of the charts

At an estimated 10 million copies sold it's still the band's best-selling album. The title sparked outrage from the public, mostly in the US, who alleged the band were Satanists, but it was in fact inspired by bassist Steve Harris' nightmare after watching *Damien: The Omen II*. Now regarded as one of the most influential metal albums of all time, it features *Run To The Hills*, which went to Number 4.

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